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THE  
Maiden & Married Life  
OF  
MARY POWELL,  
*Afterwards Mistress Milton.*



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T H E

Maiden and Married Life

O F

M A R Y P O W E L L ,

*Afterwards Mistress Milton.*

---

JOURNALL.

*Forest Hill, Oxon, May 1st, 1643.*

1643.

\* \* \* \* SEVENTEENTH Birth-

May 1st.

daye. A Gypfie Woman at the Gate  
woulde faine have tolde my Fortune;  
but *Mother* chafed her away, faying  
ſhe had doubtleſſe harboured in ſome  
of the low Houſes in *Oxford*, and  
mighte bring us the Plague. Coulede  
have cried for Vexation; ſhe had  
promiſed to tell me the Colour of  
my

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my Husband's Eyes; but *Mother* says she believes I shall never have one, I am foe fillie. *Father* gave me a gold Piece. Dear *Mother* is chafed, methinks, touching this Debt of five hundred Pounds, which *Father* says he knows not how to pay. Indeed, he sayd, overnighte, his whole personal Estate amounts to but five hundred Pounds, his Timber and Wood to four hundred more, or thereabouts; and the Tithes and Messuages of *Whateley* are no great Matter, being mortgaged for about as much moore, and he hath lent Sights of Money to them that won't pay, so 'tis hard to be thus prest. Poor *Father*! 'twas good of him to give me this gold Piece.

May 2nd.

Cousin *Rose* married to Master *Roger Agnew*. Present, *Father*, *Mother*, and *Brother* of *Rose*. *Father*,  
*Mother*,

*Mother, Dick, Bob, Harry, and I; Squire Paice and his Daughter Audrey; an olde Aunt of Master Roger's, and one of his Coufins, a stiffe-backed Man with large Eares, and such a long Nose! Cousin Rose looked bewtifulle—pitie so faire a Girl should marry so olde a Man—'tis thoughte he wants not manie Years of fifty.*

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New Misfortunes in the Poultrie Yarde. Poor *Mother's* Loyalty cannot stand the Demands for her best Chickens, Ducklings, &c., for the Use of his Majesty's Officers since the King hath beene in *Oxford*. She accuseth my *Father* of having beene wonne over by a few faire Speeches to be more of a Royalist than his natural Temper inclineth him to; which, of course, he will not admit.

May 7th.

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May 8th.

Whole Day taken up in a Visit to *Rose*, now a Week married, and growne quite matronlie already. We reached *Sheepscote* about an Hour before Noone. A long, broade, strait Walke of green Turf, planted with Hollyoaks, Sunflowers, &c., and some earlier Flowers alreadie in Bloom, led up to the rusticall Porch of a truly farm-like House, with low gable Roofs, a long lattice Window on either Side the Doore, and three Casements above. Such, and no more, is *Rose's* House! But she is happy, for she came running forthe, soe soone as she hearde *Clover's* Feet, and helped me from my Saddle all smiling, tho' she had not expected to see us. We had Curds and Creame; and she wished it were the Time of Strawberries, for she sayd they had large Beds; and then my *Father* and the Boys  
went

went forthe to looke for Master *Agnew*. Then *Rose* took me up to her Chamber, finging as she went; and the long, low Room was sweet with Flowers. Sayd I, “*Rose*, to be Mistres of this pretty Cottage, ‘twere hardlie amisse to marry a Man as olde as Master *Roger*.” “Olde!” quoth she, “deare *Moll*, you must not deeme him olde; why, he is but forty-two; and am not I twenty-three?” She lookt foe earneste and hurte, that I coulde not but falle a laughing.

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*Mother* gone to *Sandford*. She hopes to get Uncle *John* to lend *Father* this Money. *Father* says she may try. ’Tis harde to discourage her with an ironicalle Smile, when she is doing alle she can, and more than manie Women woulde, to help *Father* in his Difficultie; but sучe,  
she

May 8th.

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the fayth fomewhat bitterlie, is the lot of our Sex. She bade *Father* mind that she had brought him three thousand Pounds, and askt what had come of them. Answered; helped to fille the Mouths of nine healthy Children, and stop the Mouth of an easie Husband; soe, with a Kiss, made it up. I have the Keys, and am left Mistressse of alle, to my greate Contentment; but the Children clamour for Sweetmeats, and *Father* sayth, “Remember, *Moll*, Discretion is the “better part of Valour.”

After *Mother* had left, went into the Paddock, to feed the Colts with Bread; and while they were putting their Noses into *Robin's* Pockets, *Dick* brought out the two Ponies, and set me on one of them, and we had a mad Scamper through the Meadows and down the Lanes; I leading. Just at the Turne of *Holford's*

*ford's Close*, came shorte upon a Gentleman walking under the Hedge, clad in a sober, genteel Suit, and of most beautifulle Countenance, with Hair like a Woman's, of a lovely pale brown, long and filky, falling over his Shoulders. I nearlie went over him, for *Clover's* hard Forehead knocked agaynst his Chest; but he stoode it like a Rock; and lookinge firste at me and then at *Dick*, he smiled and spoke to my Brother, who seemed to know him, and turned about and walked by us, sometimes stroaking *Clover's* shaggy Mane. I felte a little ashamed; for *Dick* had sett me on the Poney just as I was, my Gown somewhat too shorte for riding: however, I drewe up my Feet and let *Clover* nibble a little Grasse, and then got rounde to the neare Side, our new Companion stille between us. He offered me  
some

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some wild Flowers, and askt me their Names; and when I tolde them, he sayd I knew more than he did, though he accounted himselfe a prettie fayre Botaniste: and we went on thus, talking of the Herbs and Simples in the Hedges; and I sayd how prettie some of their Names were, and that, methought, though Adam had named alle the Animals in Paradise, perhaps Eve had named alle the Flowers. He lookt earnestlie at me, on this, and muttered "prettie." Then *Dick* askt of him News from *London*, and he spoke, methought, reservedlie; ever and anon turning his bright, thoughtfull Eyes on me. At length, we parted at the Turn of the Lane.

I askt *Dick* who he was, and he told me he was one Mr. *John Milton*, the Party to whom *Father* owed five hundred Pounds. He was the Sonne  
of



of a *Buckinghamshire* Gentleman, he added, well connected, and very scholarlike, but affected towards the Parliament. His Grandfire, a zealous Papiste, formerly lived in *Oxon*, and disinherited the Father of this Gentleman for abjuring the *Romish* Faith.

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When I found how faire a Gentleman was *Father's* Creditor, I became the more interested in deare *Mother's* Successe.

*Dick* began to harpe on another Ride to *Sheepscote* this Morning, and perswaded *Father* to let him have the bay Mare, soe he and I started at aboute Ten o' the Clock. Arrived at Master *Agnew's* Doore, found it open, no one in Parlour or Studdy; soe *Dick* tooke the Horses rounde, and then we went straite thro' the House, into the Garden behind, which

May 13th.

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which is on a rising Ground, with pleached Alleys and turfen Walks, and a Peep of the Church through the Trees. A Lad tolde us his Mistrefs was with the Bees, soe we walked towards the Hives; and, from an Arbour hard by, hearde a Murmur, though not of Bees, issuing. In this rusticall Bowre, found *Roger Agnew* reading to *Rose* and to *Mr. Milton*. Thereupon ensued manie cheerfulle Salutations, and *Rose* proposd returning to the House, but *Master Agnew* sayd it was pleasanter in the Bowre, where was Room for alle; soe then *Rose* offerd to take me to her Chamber to lay aside my Hoode, and promised to send a Jun-kett into the Arbour; whereon *Mr. Agnew* smiled at *Mr. Milton*, and sayd somewhat of “neat-handed *Phillis*.”

As we went alonge, I tolde *Rose*

I had seene her Gueft once before,  
and thought him a comely, pleasant  
Gentleman. She laught, and sayd,  
“ Pleasant? why, he is one of the  
“ greateft Scholars of our Time, and  
“ knows more Languages than you  
“ or I ever hearde of.” I made  
Answer, “ That may be, and yet  
“ might not ensure his being plea-  
“ sant, but rather the contrary, for  
“ I cannot reade *Greeke* and *Latin*,  
“ *Rose*, like you.” Quoth *Rose*,  
“ But you can reade *English*, and he  
“ hath writ some of the loveliest  
“ *English* Verses you ever hearde,  
“ and hath brought us a new Com-  
“ posure this Morning, which *Roger*,  
“ being his olde College Friend, was  
“ discussing with him, to my greate  
“ Pleasure, when you came. After  
“ we have eaten the Junkett, he  
“ shall beginne it again.” “ By no  
“ Means,” said I, “ for I love Talking  
more

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“more than Reading.” However, it was not soe to be, for *Rose* would not be foyled; and as it would not have been good Manners to decline the Hearinge in Prefence of the Poet, I was conſtrayned to ſuppreſſe a ſecret Yawne, and feign Attention, though, Truth to ſay, it ſoone wandered; and, during the laſte halfe Hour, I ſat in a compleat Dreame, tho’ not unpleaſant one. *Roger* having made an End, ’twas diverting to heare him commending the Piece unto the Author, who as gravely accepted it; yet, with nothing fullſome about the one, or miſproud about the other. Indeed, there was a ſedate Sweetneſſe in the Poet’s Wordes as well as Lookes; and ſhortlie, waiving the Diſcuſſion of his owne Compoſures, he beganne to talke of thoſe of other Men, as *Shakspeare*, *Spencer*, *Cowley*, *Ben Jonſon*,

*Jonson*, and of *Tasso*, and *Tasso's* Friend the Marquis of *Villa*, whome, it appeared, Mr. *Milton* had Knowledge of in *Italy*. Then he askt me, woulde I not willingly have seene the Country of *Romeo* and *Juliet*, and prest to know whether I loved Poetry; but finding me loath to tell, sayd he doubted not I preferred Romances, and that he had read manie, and loved them dearly too. I sayd, I loved *Shakspeare's* Plays better than *Sidney's* *Arcadia*; on which he cried "Righte," and drew nearer to me, and woulde have talked at greater length; but, knowing from *Rose* how learned he was, I feared to shew him I was a fillie Foole; soe, like a fillie Foole, held my Tongue.

Dinner; Eggs, Bacon, roast Ribs of Lamb, Spinach, Potatoes, favoury Pie, a *Brentford* Pudding, and Cheefecakes. What a pretty Houfewise

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Houfewife *Rose* is! *Roger's* plain Hospitalitie and scholarlie Discourse appeared to much Advantage. He askt of News from *Paris*; and Mr. *Milton* spoke much of the *Swedish* Ambassadour, *Dutch* by Birth; a Man renowned for his Learning, Magnanimity, and Misfortunes, of whome he had seene much. He tolde *Rose* and me how this Mister *Van der Groot*e had beene unjustlie caste into Prifon by his Countrymen; and how his good Wife had shared his Captivitie, and had tried to get his Sentence reversed; failing which, she contrived his Escape in a big Chest, which she pretended to be full of heavie olde Bookes. Mr. *Milton* concluded with the Exclamation, "Indeede, there never was such a Woman;" on which, deare *Roger*, whome I beginne to love, quoth, "Oh yes, there are manie such,

“such,—we have two at Table  
“now.” Whereat, Mr. *Milton*  
smiled.

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At Leave-taking pressed Mr. *Agnew* and *Rose* to come and see us  
soone; and *Dick* askt Mr. *Milton*  
to see the Bowling Greene.

Ride Home, delightfule.

Thought, when I woke this Morn-  
ing, I had been dreaminge of *St. Paul*  
let down the Wall in a Basket;  
but founde, on more closely examin-  
ing the Matter, 'twas *Grotius* carried  
down the Ladder in a Chest; and  
methought I was his Wife, leaninge  
from the Window above, and crying  
to the Souldiers, “Have a Care, have  
a Care!” 'Tis certayn I shoulde have  
betrayed him by an Over-anxietie.

May 14th.

Resolved to give *Father* a *Sheepscote*  
Dinner, but *Margery* affirmed  
the Haunch woulde no longer keepe,  
fo

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fo was forced to have it drest, though meaninge to have kept it for Companie. Little *Kate*, who had been out alle the Morning, came in with her Lap full of Butter-burs, the which I was glad to see, as *Mother* esteemes them a soveraign Remedie 'gainst the Plague, which is like to be rife in *Oxford* this Summer, the Citie being so overcrowded on account of his Majestie. While laying them out on the Stille-room Floor, in bursts *Robin* to say Mr. *Agnew* and Mr. *Milton* were with *Father* at the Bowling Greene, and woulde dine here. Soe was glad *Margery* had put down the Haunch. 'Twas past one o' the Clock, however, before it coulde be sett on Table; and I had just run up to pin on my Carnation Knots, when I hearde them alle come in discourfing merrilie.

At Dinner Mr. *Milton* askt *Robin*  
of



of his Studdies; and I was in Payne for the deare Boy, knowing him to be better affected to his out-doore Recreations than to his Booke; but he answered boldlie he was in *Ovid*, and I lookt in Mr. *Milton's* Face to gueffe was that goode Scholarship or no; but he turned it towards my *Father*, and sayd he was trying an Experiment on two young Nephews of his owne, whether the reading those Authors that treat of physical Subjects mighte not advantage them more than the Poets; whereat my *Father* jested with him, he being himselfe one of the Fraternitie he seemed to despise. But he uphelde his Argumente so bravelie, that *Father* listened in earneste Silence. Meantime, the Cloth being drawne, and I in Feare of remaining over long, was avised to withdrawe myselfe earlie, *Robin* following, and begging

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begging me to goe downe to the Fish-ponds. Afterwards alle the others joynd us, and we fate on the Steps till the Sun went down, when, the Horses being broughte round, our Guests tooke Leave without returning to the House. *Father* walked thoughtfullie Home with me, leaning on my Shoulder, and spake little.

May 15th.

After writing the above last Night, in my Chamber, went to Bed and had a most heavenlie Dreame. Me-thoughte it was brighte, brighte Moonlighte, and I was walking with Mr. *Milton* on a Terrace,—not *our* Terrace, but in some outlandish Place; and it had Flights and Flights of green Marble Steps, descending, I cannot tell how farre, with Stone Figures and Vases on everie one. We went downe and downe these  
Steps,

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Steps, till we came to a faire Piece of Water, still in the Moonlighte; and then, methoughte, he woulde be taking Leave, and sayd much aboute Absence and Sorrowe, as tho' we had knowne eache other some Space; and alle that he sayd was delightfulle to heare. Of a suddain we hearde Cries, as of Distresse, in a Wood that came quite down to the Water's Edge, and Mr. *Milton* sayd, "Hearken!" and then, "There is some one being flaine in the Woode, I must goe to rescue him;" and soe, drewe his Sword and ran off. Meanwhile, the Cries continued, but I did not seeme to mind them much; and, looking stedfastlie downe into the cleare Water, coulde see to an immeasur-able Depth, and beheld, oh, rare! Girls sitting on glistening Rocks, far downe beneath, combing and  
braiding

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braiding their brighte Hair, and talking and laughing, onlie I coulde not heare aboute what. And their Kirtles were like spun Glafs, and their Bracelets Coral and Pearl; and I thought it the fairest Sight that Eyes coulde see. But, alle at once, the Cries in the Wood affrighted them, for they started, looked upwards and alle aboute, and began swimming thro' the cleare Water so fast, that it became troubled and thick, and I coulde see them noe more. Then I was aware that the Voices in the Wood were of *Dick* and *Harry*, calling for *me*; and I foughte to answer, "Here!" but my Tongue was heavie. Then I commenced running towards them, through ever so manie greene Paths, in the Wood; but still, we coulde never meet; and I began to see grinning Faces, neither of Man nor Beaste,

Beaste, peeping at me through the  
Trees; and one and another of them  
called me by Name; and in greate  
Feare and Paine I awoke!

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\* \* \* \* Strange Things are  
Dreames. Dear *Mother* thinks much  
of them, and sayth they oft portend  
coming Events. My *Father* holdeth  
the Opinion that they are rather  
made up of what hath alreadie come  
to passe; but surelie naught like this  
Dreame of mine hath in anie Part  
befallen me hithertoe?

\* \* \* \* What strange Fable  
or Masque were they reading that  
Day at *Sheepscoate*? I mind not.

Too much bufied of late to write,  
though much hath happened which  
I woulde fain remember. Dined at  
*Shotover* yesterday. Met *Mother*,  
who is coming Home in a Day or  
two, but helde short Speech with  
me

May 20th.

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me aside concerning Houfewifery. The *Agnews* there, of course : alsoe Mr. *Milton*, whom we have seene continuallie, lately; and I know not how it shoulde be, but he seemeth to like me. *Father* affects him much, but *Mother* loveth him not. She hath seene little of him : perhaps the lesse the better. *Ralph Hewlett*, as usuall, forward in his rough Endeavours to please; but, though no Scholar, I have yet Sense enough to prefer Mr. *Milton's* Discourse to his. \* \* \* \* I wish I were fonder of Studdy; but, since it cannot be, what need to vex? Some are born of one Mind, some of another. *Rose* was alwaies for her Booke; and, had *Rose* beene no Scholar, Mr. *Agnew* woulde, may be, never have given her a second Thoughte: but alle are not of the same Way of thinking.

\* \* \* \* A few Lines received from *Mother's* "spoilt Boy," as *Father* hath called Brother *Bill*, ever since he went a soldiering. Blurred and mis-spelt as they are, she will prize them. Trulie, we are none of us grate hands at the Pen; 'tis well I make this my Copie-booke.

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\* \* \* \* Oh, strange Event! Can this be 'Happineffe? Why, then, am I soe feared, soe mazed, soe prone to weeping? I woulde that *Mother* were here. Lord have Mercie on me a finfulle, fillie Girl, and guide my Steps arighte.

\* \* \* \* It seemes like a Dreame, (I have done noughte but dreame of late, I think,) my going along the matted Passage, and hearing Voices in my *Father's* Chamber, just as my Hand was on the Latch; and my withdrawing my Hand, and going softlie away, though I never paused  
at

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at disturbing him before; and, after I had beene a full Houre in the stille Room, turning over ever soe manie Trays full of dried Herbs and Flower-leaves, hearing him come forthe and call, “ *Moll*, deare *Moll*, “ where are you ? ” with I know not what of strange in the Tone of his Voice ; and my running to him hastilie, and his drawing me into his Chamber, and closing the Doore. Then he takes me round the Waiste, and remains quite silent awhile ; I gazing on him so strangelie ! and at length, he says with a Kind of Sigh, “ Thou art indeed but young yet ! “ scarce seventeen,—and fresh, as “ *Mr. Milton* says, as the earlie May ; “ too tender, forsooth, to leave us “ yet, sweet Child ! But what wilt “ say, *Moll*, when I tell thee that a “ well-esteemed Gentleman, whom “ as yet indeed I know too little of, hath



“ hath craved of me Access to the  
“ House as one that would win  
“ your Favour ? ”

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Thereupon, such a suddain Faint-  
ness of the Spiritts overtooke me,  
(a Thing I am noe way subject to,)  
as that I fell down in a Swound at  
*Father's* Feet ; and when I came to  
myselfe agayn, my Hands and Feet  
seemed full of Prickles, and there  
was a Humming, as of *Rose's* Bees,  
in mine Ears. *Lettice* and *Margery*  
were tending of me, and *Father*  
watching me full of Care ; but soe  
soone as he saw me open mine Eyes,  
he bade the Maids stand aside, and  
sayd, stooping over me, “ Enough,  
“ dear *Moll* ; we will talk noe more  
“ of this at present.” “ Onlie just  
“ tell me,” quoth I, in a Whisper,  
“ who it is.” “ Guesse,” sayd he.  
“ I cannot,” I softlie replied ; and,  
with the Lie, came such a Rush of  
Blood

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Blood to my Cheeks as betraied me.  
 “ I am fure you have though,” sayd  
 deare *Father*, gravelie, “ and I neede  
 “ not say it is Mr. *Milton*, of whome  
 “ I know little more than you doe,  
 “ and that is not enough. On the  
 “ other hand, *Roger Agnew* sayth  
 “ that he is one of whome we  
 “ can never know too much, and  
 “ there is somewhat about him  
 “ which inclines me to believe it.”  
 “ What will *Mother* say?” inter-  
 rupted I. Thereat *Father’s* Coun-  
 tenance changed; and he hastilie  
 answered, “ Whatever she likes: I  
 “ have an Answer for her, and a  
 “ Question too;” and abruptlie left  
 me, bidding me keepe myselfe quiet.

But can I? Oh, no! *Father* hath  
 sett a Stone rolling, unwitting of its  
 Course. It hath prostrated me in  
 the first Instance, and will, I mis-  
 doubt, hurt my *Mother*. *Father* is  
 bold

bold enow in her Absence, but when she comes back will leave me to face her Anger alone ; or else, make such a Stir to shew that he is not governed by a Woman, as wille make Things worfe. Meanwhile, how woulde I have them? Am I most pleased or payned? dismayed or flattered? Indeed, I know not.

\* \* \* \* I am soe sorry to have swooned. Needed I have done it, merelie to heare there was one who foughte my Favour? Aye, but one soe wife! so thoughtfulle! so unlike me!

*Bedtime ; same Daye.*

\* \* \* \* Who knoweth what a Daye will bring forth? After writing the above, I fate like one stupid, ruminating on I know not what, except on the Unlikelihood that one soe wife woulde trouble himselfe to *seeke* for aught and yet fail to *win*.

After

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After abiding a long Space in mine owne Chamber, alle below seeming still, I began to wonder shoulde we dine alone or not, and to have a hundred hot and cold Fitts of Hope and Feare. Thought I, if Mr. *Milton* comes, assuredlie I cannot goe down; but yet I must; but yet I will not; but yet the best will be to conduct myselfe as though nothing had happened; and, as he seems to have left the House long ago, maybe he hath returned to *Sheepscote*, or even to *London*. Oh that *London*! Shall I indeede ever see it? and the rare Shops, and the Play-houses, and *St. Paul's*, and the *Towre*? But what and if that ever comes to pass? Must I leave Home? dear *Forest Hill*? and *Father* and *Mother*, and the Boys? more especiallie *Robin*? Ah! but *Father* will give me a long Time to think of it. He will, and must.

Then

Then Dinner-time came ; and, with Dinner-time, Uncle *Hewlett* and *Ralph*, Squire *Paice* and Mr. *Milton*. We had a huge Sirloin, soe no Feare of short Commons. I was not ill pleased to see soe manie : it gave me an Excuse for holding my Peace, but I coulede have wished for another Woman. However, *Father* never thinks of that, and *Mother* will soone be Home. After Dinner the elder Men went to the Bowling-greene with *Dick* and *Ralph* ; the Boys to the Fish-ponds ; and, or ever I was aware, Mr. *Milton* was walking with me on the Terrace. My Dreame came soe forcibly to Mind, that my Heart seemed to leap into my Mouth ; but he kept away from the Fish-ponds, and from Leave-taking, and from his morning Discourse with my *Father*,—at least  
for

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for awhile ; but some Way he got round to it, and fayd foe much, and foe well, that, after alle my *Father's* bidding me keepe quiete and take my Time, and mine owne Resolution to think much and long, he never rested till he had changed the whole Appearance of Things, and made me promise to be his, wholly and trulie.—And oh! I feare I have been too quickly wonne!

May 23d.

*May 23d.* At lease, so fayeth the Calendar ; but with me it hath beene trulie an *April* Daye, alle Smiles and Teares. And now my Spiritts are foe perturbed and dismaid, as that I know not whether to weepe or no, for methinks crying would relieve me. At first waking this Morning my Mind was elated at the Falstie of my *Mother's* Notion, that no Man of Sense woulde think  
me

me worth the having; and soe I got up too proude, I think, and came down too vain, for I had spent an unusuall Time at the Glasse. My Spiritts, alsoe, were soe unequall, that the Boys took Notice of it, and it seemed as though I coulde breathe nowhere but out of Doors; so the Children and I had a rare Game of Play in the Home-closet; but ever and anon I kept looking towards the Road and listning for Horses' Feet, till *Robin* sayd, "One would think "the King was coming:" but at last came Mr. *Milton*, quite another Way, walking through the Fields with huge Strides. *Kate* saw him firste, and tolde me; and then sayd, "What makes you look soe pale?"

\* \* \* \* \*

We fate a good Space under the Hawthorn Hedge on the Brow of the Hill, listning to the Mower's Scythe,

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Scythe, and the Song of Birds, which seemed enough for him, without talking; and as he spake not, I helde my Peace, till, with the Sun in my Eyes, I was like to drop asleep; which, as his own Face was *from* me, and towards the Landskip, he noted not. I was just aiming, for Mirthe's Sake, to steale away, when he suddainlie turned about and fell to speaking of rurall Life, Happinesse, Heaven, and such like, in a Kind of Rapture; then, with his Elbow half raising him from the Grass, lay looking at me; then commenced humming or singing I know not what Strayn, but 'twas of '*begli Occhi*' and '*Chioma aurata*;' and he kept smiling the while he sang.

After a time we went In-doors; and then came my firste Pang: for *Father* founde out how I had pledged myselfe



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myfelfe overnichte ; and for a Moment looked foe grave, that my Heart misgave me for having beene foe haftie. However, it foone paffed off; deare *Father's* Countenance cleared, and he even feemed merrie at Table; and soon after Dinner alle the Party difperfed fave Mr. *Milton*, who loitered with me on the Terrace. After a fhort Silence he exclaimed, “ How good is our  
“ God to us in alle his Gifts! For  
“ Instance, in this Gift of *Love*,  
“ whereby had he withdrawn from  
“ vifible Nature a thoufand of its  
“ glorious Features and gay Colour-  
“ ings, we fhoulde ftill poffefs, *from*  
“ *within*, the Means of throwing  
“ over her clouded Face an entirelie  
“ different Hue! while as it is, what  
“ was pleafing before now pleafeth  
“ more than ever! Is it not foe,  
“ fweet *Moll*? May I exprefs thy  
Feelings

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“ Feelings as well as mine own,  
“ unblamed? or am I too adven-  
“ turous? You are silent; well,  
“ then, let me believe that we think  
“ alike, and that the Emotions of  
“ the few laste Hours have given  
“ such an Impulse to alle that is  
“ high, and sweete, and deepe, and  
“ pure, and holy in our innermoste  
“ Hearts, as that we seeme now  
“ onlie firste to taste the *Life of*  
“ *Life*, and to perceive how much  
“ nearer Earth is to Heaven than  
“ we thought! Is it soe? Is it not  
“ soe?” and I was constrained to  
say, “ Yes,” at I scarcelie knew  
what; grudginglie too, for I feared  
having once alreadie sayd “ Yes ”  
too soone. But he saw nought  
amisse, for he was expecting nought  
amisse; soe went on, most like Truth  
and Love that Lookes could speake  
or Words sounde: “ Oh, I know  
it,

“ it, I feel it :—henceforthe there  
“ is a Life reserved for us in which  
“ Angels may sympathize. For this  
“ most excellent Gift of Love shall  
“ enable us to read together the  
“ whole Booke of Sanctity and Vir-  
“ tue, and emulate eache other in  
“ carrying it into Practice ; and as  
“ the wise *Magians* kept their Eyes  
“ steadfastlie fixed on the Star, and  
“ followed it righte on, through  
“ rough and smoothe, soe we, with  
“ this bright Beacon, which indeed  
“ is set on Fire of Heaven, shall  
“ pass on through the peacefull  
“ Studdies, surmounted Adversities,  
“ and victorious Agonies of Life,  
“ ever looking steadfastlie up ! ”

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Alle this, and much more, as tedious to heare as to write, did I listen to, firste with flagging Attention, next with concealed Wearinesse ;—and as Wearinesse, if indulged,

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dulged, never *is* long concealed, it  
foe chanced, by Ill-luck, that Mr.  
*Milton*, suddainlie turning his Eyes  
from Heaven upon poor me, caughte,  
I can scarcelie expresse how flighte,  
an Indication of Discomforte in my  
Face; and instantlie a Cloud crossed  
his owne, though as thin as that  
through which the Sun shines while  
it floats over him. Oh, 'twas not  
of a Moment! and yet *in that Moment*  
we seemed eache to have seene the  
other, though but at a Glance, under  
new Circumstances:—as though two  
Persons at a Masquerade had just  
removed their Masques and put  
them on agayn. This gave me my  
seconde Pang:—I felt I had given  
him Payn; and though he made as  
though he forgot it directly, and I  
tooke Payns to make him forget it,  
I coulde never be quite sure whether  
he had.

My

\* \* \* \* My Spiritts were soe dashed by this, and by learning his Age to be soe much more than I had deemed it, (for he is thirty-five! who coulde have thoughte it?) that I had, thenceforthe, the Aire of being much more discreete and penfive than belongeth to my Nature; whereby he was, perhaps, well pleased. As I became more grave he became more gay; soe that we met eache other, as it were, Half-way, and became righte pleasant. If his Countenance were comely before, it is quite heavenlie now; and yet I question whether my Love increaseth as rapidlie as my Feare. Surelie my Folly will prove as distastefull to him, as his overmuch Wisdome to me. The Dread of it hath alarmed me alreadie. What has become, even now, of alle my gay Visions of Marriage,  
and

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and *London*, and the Play-houfes, and the *Towre*? They have faded away thus earlie, and in their Place comes a Foreboding of I can scarce fay what. I am as if a Child, receiving from some olde Fairy the Gift of what seemed a fayre Doll's Houfe, shoulde haftilie open the Doore thereof, and starte back at beholding nought within but a huge Cavern, deepe, high, and vafte; in parte glittering with glorious Chryftals, and the Reft hidden in obfcure Darkneffe.

May 24th.

Deare *Rofe* came this Morning. I flew forthe to welcome her, and as I drew near, ſhe lookt upon me with ſuch a Kind of Awe as that I could not forbear laughing. Mr. *Milton* having ſlept at *Sheepſcote*, had made her privy to our Engage-ment; for indeede, he and Mr. *Agnew* are

are such Friends, he will keep nothing from him. Thus *Rose* heares it before my owne Mother, which shoulde not be. When we had entered my Chamber, she embraced me once and agayn, and seemed to think soe much of my uncommon Fortune, that I beganne to think more of it myselfe. To heare her talke of Mr. *Milton* one would have supposed her more in Love with him than I. Like a Bookworm as she is, she fell to praying his Composures. "Oh, the leaste I care for in him is "his Versing," quoth I; and from that Moment a Spiritt of Mischief tooke Possession of me, to do a thousand heedlesse, ridiculous Things throughoute the Day, to shew *Rose* how little I set by the Opinion of soe wife a Man. Once or twice Mr. *Milton* lookt earnestlie and question-ingly at me, but I heeded him not.

Discourse

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\* \* \* \* Discourse at Table graver and less pleasant, methoughte, than heretofore. Mr. *Busire* having dropt in, was avised to ask Mr. *Milton* why, having had an university Education, he had not entered the Church. He replied, drylie enough, because he woulde not subscribe himselfe *Slave* to anie Formularies of Men's making. I saw *Father* bite his Lip; and *Roger Agnew* mildly observed, he thought him wrong; for that it was not for an Individual to make Rules for another Individual, but yet that the generall Voice of the Wise and Good, removed from the petty Prejudices of private Feeling, mighte pronounce authoritatively wherein an Individual was righte or wrong, and frame Laws to keepe him in the righte Path. Mr. *Milton* replied, that manie Fallibles could no more make up an Infallible than  
manie



manie Finites could make an Infinite. Mr. *Agnew* rejoyned, that ne'ertheleffe, an Individual who opposed himfelfe agaynst the generall Current of the Wise and Good, was, leaste of alle, likelie to be in the Right; and that the Limitations of human Intellect which made the Judgment of manie wise Men liable to Question, certainlie made the Judgment of *anie* wise Man, self-dependent, more questionable still. Mr. *Milton* shortlie replied that there were Particulars in the required Oaths which made him unable to take them without Perjurie. And soe, an End: but 'twas worth a World to see *Rose* looking soe anxiously from the one Speaker to the other, desirous that eache should be victorious; and I was sorry that it lasted not a little longer.

As *Rose* and I tooke our Way to  
the

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the Summer-house, she put her Arm round me, saying, “How charming “is divine Philosophie!” I could not helpe asking if she did not meane how charming was the Philosophie of one particular Divine? Soe then she discoursed with me of Things more seemlie for Women than Philosophie or Divinitie either. Onlie, when Mr. *Agnew* and Mr. *Milton* joyned us, she woulde aske them to repeat one Piece of Poetry after another, beginning with *Carew's*—

“*He who loves a rosie Cheeke,  
Or a coral Lip admires,—*”

And crying at the End of eache, “Is not that lovely? Is not that “divine?” I franklie sayd I liked none of them soe much as some Mr. *Agnew* had recited, concluding with—

“*Mortals*

“ *Mortals that would, follow me,  
Love Virtue : she alone is free.*”

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Whereon Mr. *Milton* surpris'd me with a suddain Kiss, to the immoderate Mirth of *Rose*, who sayd I coulde not have looked more discompos'd had he pretended he was the Author of those Verses. I afterwards found he *was*; but I think she laugh't more than there was neede.

We have ever been consider'd a sufficientlie religious Familie: that is, we goe regularly to Church on Sabbaths and Prayer-dayes, and keepe alle the Fafts and Festivalles. But Mr. *Milton's* Devotion hath attayned a Pitch I can neither imitate nor even comprehend. The spirituall World seemeth to him not onlie reall, but I may almoste say visible. For instance, he tolde *Rose*,  
it

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it appears, that on *Tuesday* Nighte, (that is the same Evening I had promised to be his,) as he went homewards to his Farm-lodging, he fancied the Angels whisperinge in his Eares, and singing over his Head, and that instead of going to his Bed like a reasonable Being, he lay down on the Grasse, and gazed on the sweete, pale Moon till she sett, and then on the bright Starres till he seemed to see them moving in a slowe, solemn Dance, to the Words, “*How glorious is our God!*” And alle about him, he said, he *knew*, tho’ he could not see them, were spirituall Beings repairing the Ravages of the Day on the Flowers, amonge the Trees, and Grasse, and Hedges; and he believed ’twas onlie the Filme that originall Sin had spread over his Eyes, that prevented his seeing them. I am thankful for  
this

this same Filme,—I cannot abide Fairies, and Witches, and Ghosts—ugh! I shudder even to write of them; and were it onlie of the more harmlesse Sort, one woulde never have the Comfote of thinkinge to be alone. I feare Churchyardes and dark Corners of alle Kinds; more especiallie Spiritts; and there is onlie one I would even wish to see at my bravest, when deepe Love casteth out Feare; and that is of Sister *Anne*, whome I never affociate with the Worme and Winding-sheete. Oh no! I think *she*, at leaste, dwells amonge the Starres, having sprung straite up into Lighte and Blisse the Moment she put off Mortalitie; and if she, why not others? Are *Adam* and *Abraham* alle these Yeares in the unconscious Tomb? Theire Bodies, but surelie not their Spiritts? else, why

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why dothe *Christ* speak of *Lazarus* lying in *Abraham's* Bosom, while the Brothers of *Dives* are yet riotouflie living? Yet what becomes of the Daye of generall Judgment, if some be thus pre-judged? I must aske Mr. *Milton*,—yes, I thinke I can finde it in my Heart to aske him about this in some solemn, stille Hour, and perhaps he will sett at Rest manie Doubts and Misgivings that at fundrie Times trouble me; being foe wise a Man.

*Bedtime.*

\* \* \* \* Glad to steale away from the noisie Companie in the Supper-roome, (comprising some of *Father's* Fellow-magistrates,) I went down with *Robin* and *Kate* to the Fish-ponds; it was scarce Sunset: and there, while we threw Crumbs to the Fish and watched them come  
to

to the Surface, were followed, or ever we were aware, by Mr. *Milton*, who fate down on the stone Seat, drew *Robin* between his Knees, stroked his Haire, and askt what we were talking about. *Robin* sayd I had beene telling them a fairie Story; and Mr. *Milton* observed that was an infinite Improvement on the jangling, puzzle-headed Prating of Country Justices, and wished I woulde tell it agayn. But I was afrayd. But *Robin* had no Feares; foe tolde the Tale roundlie; onlie he forgot the End. Soe he found his Way backe to the Middle, and seemed likelie to make it last alle Night; onlie Mr. *Milton* sayd he seemed to have got into the Labyrinth of *Crete*, and he must for Pitie's Sake give him the Clew. Soe he finished *Robin's* Story, and then tolde another, a most lovelie  
one,

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one, of Ladies, and Princes, and Enchanters, and a brazen Horse, and he sayd the End of *that* Tale had been cut off too, by Reason the Writer had died before he finished it. But *Robin* cryed, “ Oh ! finish “ this too,” and hugged and kist him ; soe he did ; and methoughte the End was better than the Beginninge. Then he sayd, “ Now, “ sweet *Moll*, you have onlie spoken “ this Hour past, by your Eyes ; “ and we must heare your pleasant “ Voice.” “ An Hour ? ” cries *Robin*. “ Where are alle the red “ Clouds gone, then ? ” quoth Mr. *Milton*, “ and what Busines hathe “ the Moon yonder ? ” “ Then we “ must go Indoors,” quoth I. But they cried “ No,” and *Robin* helde me fast, and Mr. *Milton* sayd I might know even by the distant Sounds of ill-governed Merriment that we  
were



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were winding up the Week's Accounts of Joy and Care more consistentlie where we were than we coulde doe in the House. And indeede just then I hearde my *Father's* Voice swelling a noisie Chorus; and hoping Mr. *Milton* did not distinguish it, I askt him if he loved Musick. He answered, soe much that it was Miserie for him to hear anie that was not of the beste. I secretlie resolved he should never heare mine. He added, he was come of a musicalle Familie, and that his Father not onlie sang well, but played finely on the Viol and Organ. Then he spake of the sweet Musick in *Italy*, untill I longed to be there; but I tolde him nothing in its Way ever pleased me more than to heare the Choristers of *Magdalen* College usher in *May Day* by chaunting a Hymn at the Top of the

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the Church Towre. Discourfing of this and that, we thus fate a good While ere we returned to the Houfe.

\* \* \* \* Coming out of Church he woulde fhun the common Field, where the Villagery led up their Sports, faying, he deemed Quoit-playing and the like to be unfuitable Recreations on a Daye whereupon the *Lord* had reſtricted us from ſpeakinge our own Words, and thinking our own (that is, ſecular) Thoughts: and that he believed the Law of *God* in this Particular woulde ſoone be the Law of the Land, for Parliament woulde ſhortlie put down *Sunday* Sports. I aſkt, “What, the *King’s* Parliament at *Oxford*?” He answered, “No; *the Country’s* Parliament at *Westminster*.” I ſayd, I was ſorrie, for manie poore hard-working Men had no other Holiday.  
He

He sayd, another Holiday woulde be given them; and that whether or no, we must not connive at Evil, which we doe in permitting an *holy Daye* to sink into a Holiday. I sayd, but was it not the *Jewish* Law, which had made such Restrictions? He sayd, yes, but that *Christ* came not to destroy the moral Law, of which Sabbath-keeping was a Part, and that even its naturall Fittesse for the bodily Welfare of Man and Beast was such as no wise Legislator would abolish or abuse it, even had he no Consideration for our spiritual and immortal Part: and that 'twas a well-known Fact that Beasts of Burthen, which had not one Daye of Rest in seven, did lesse Worke in the End. As for oure Soules, he sayd, they required their spiritual Meales as much as our Bodies required theirs; and even poore,  
rusticall

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rusticall Clownes who coulde not reade, mighte nourish their better Parts by an holie Pause, and by looking within them, and around them, and above them. I felt inclined to tell him that long Sermons alwaies seemed to make me love *God* lesf insteade of more, but woulde not, fearing he mighte take it that I meant *he* had been giving me one.

Monday.

*Mother* hath returned! The Moment I hearde her Voice I fell to trembling. At the same Moment I hearde *Robin* cry, "Oh, *Mother*, I " have broken the greene Beaker!" which betraied Apprehension in another Quarter. However, she quite mildlie replied, "Ah, I knew the " Handle was loose," and then kist me with soe great Affection that I felt quite easie. She had benee withhelde by a troublesome Colde  
from

from returning at the appointed Time, and cared not to write. 'Twas just Supper-time, and there were the Children to kifs and to give their Bread and Milk, and *Bill's* Letter to reade; soe that nothing particular was sayd till the younger Ones were gone to Bed, and *Father* and *Mother* were taking some Wine and Toaft. Then says *Father*, "Well, Wife, "have you got the five hundred "Pounds?" "No," she answers, rather careleslie. "I tolde you how "'twoulde be," says *Father*; "you "mighte as well have stayered at "Home." "Really, Mr. *Powell*," says *Mother*, "soe seldom as I stir "from my owne Chimney-corner, "you neede not to grudge me, I "think, a few Dayes among our "mutuall Relatives." "I shall goe "to Gaol," says *Father*. "Non- "sense," says *Mother*; "to Gaol indeed!"

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“ indeed ! ” “ Well, then, who is  
“ to keepe me from it ? ” says *Fa-*  
*ther*, laughing. “ I will answer for  
“ it, Mr. *Milton* will wait a little  
“ longer for his Money,” says *Mo-*  
*ther*, “ he is an honourable Man,  
“ I suppose.” “ I wish he may  
“ thinke me one,” says *Father* ;  
“ and as to a little longer, what is  
“ the goode of waiting for what  
“ is as unlikelie to come eventuallie  
“ as now ? ” “ You must answer  
“ that for yourselfe,” says *Mother*,  
looking wearie : “ I have done what  
“ I can, and can doe no more.”  
“ Well, then, ’tis lucky Matters  
“ stand as they do,” says *Father*.  
“ Mr. *Milton* has been much here in  
“ your Absence, my Dear, and has  
“ taken a Liking to our *Moll* ; foe,  
“ believing him, as you say, to be  
“ an honourable Man, I have pro-  
“ mised he shall have her.” “ Non-  
sense,”

“ sense,” cries *Mother*, turning red and then pale. “ Never farther from Nonsense,” says *Father*, “ for ‘tis to be, and by the Ende of the Month too.” “ You are bantering me, Mr. *Powell*,” says *Mother*. “ How can you suppose soe, my Deare?” says *Father*, “ you doe me Injustice.” “ Why, *Moll!*” cries *Mother*, turning sharplie towards me, as I fate mute and fearfull, “ what is alle this, Child? You cannot, you dare not think of wedding this round-headed Puritan.” “ Not round-headed,” sayd I, trembling; “ his Haire is as long and curled as mine.” “ Don’t bandy Words with me, Girl,” says *Mother* passionatelie, “ see how unfit you are to have a House of your owne, who cannot be left in Charge of your *Father’s* for a Fortnighte, without falling into Mischiefe!”

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“ Mischiefe !” “ I won’t have *Moll* “ chidden in that Way,” says *Father*, “ she has fallen into noe Mischiefe, “ and has beene a discrete and “ dutifull Child.” “ Then it has “ beene alle your doing,” says *Mother*, “ and you have forced the “ Child into this Match.” “ Noe “ Forcing whatever,” says *Father*, “ they like one another, and I am “ very glad of it, for it happens to “ be very convenient.” “ Conve- “ nient, indeed,” repeats *Mother*, and falls a weeping. Thereon I must needs weepe too, but she says, “ Begone to Bed ; there is noe Neede “ that you shoulde sit by to heare “ your owne *Father* confesse what “ a Fool he has beene.”

To my Bedroom I have come, but cannot yet seek my Bed ; the more as I still heare their Voices in Contention below.

Tuesday.



This Morninge's Breakfast was moſte uncomfortable, I feeling like a checkt Child, ſcarce minding to looke up or to eat. *Mother*, with Eyes red and ſwollen, ſcarce ſpeaking ſave to the Children; *Father* directing his Diſcourſe chieflie to *Dick*, concerning Farm Matters and the Rangerſhip of *Shotover*, tho' 'twas eaſie to ſee his Mind was not with them. Soe ſoone as alle had diſperſed to their cuſtomed Taſkes, and I was loitering at the Window, *Father* calls aloud to me from his Study. Thither I go, and find him and *Mother*, ſhe fitting with her Back to both. "*Moll*," ſays *Father*, with great Determination, "you have accepted Mr. *Milton* to pleaſe yourſelf, you will marry him out of hand to pleaſe me." "Spare me, spare me, Mr. *Powell*," interrupts *Mother*, "if the Engagement may  
not

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“not be broken off, at the least  
“precipitate it not with this in-  
“decent haste. Postpone it till——”  
“Till when?” says *Father*. “Till  
“the Child is olde enough to know  
“her owne Mind.” “That is, to  
“put off an honourable Man on  
“false Pretences,” says *Father*, “she  
“is olde enough to know it alreadye.  
“Speake, *Moll*, are you of your  
“*Mother's* Mind to give up Mr.  
“*Milton* altogether?” I trembled,  
but sayd, “No.” “Then, as his  
“Time is precious, and he knows  
“not when he may leave his Home  
“agayn, I save you the Trouble,  
“Child, of naming a Day, for it  
“shall be the *Monday* before *Whit-*  
“*suntide*.” Thereat *Mother* gave  
a Kind of Groan; but as for me,  
I had like to have fallen on the  
Ground, for I had had noe Thought  
of suche Haste. “See what you are  
doing,

“doing, Mr. *Powell*,” says *Mother*,  
compassionating me, and raising me  
up, though somewhat roughlie ;  
“I prophetic Evil of this Match.”  
“Prophets of Evil are sure to find  
“Listeners,” says *Father*, “but I am  
“not one of them ;” and soe left  
the Room. Thereon my *Mother*,  
who alwaies feares him when he  
has a Fit of Determination, loosed  
the Bounds of her Passion, and chid  
me so unkindlie, that, humbled and  
mortified, I was glad to seeke my  
Chamber.

\* \* \* \* Entering the Dining-  
room, however, I uttered a Shriek  
on seeing *Father* fallen back in his  
Chair, as though in a Fit, like unto  
that which terrified us a Year ago ;  
and *Mother* hearing me call out, ran  
in, loosed his Collar, and soone  
broughte him to himselfe, tho’ not  
without much Alarm to alle. He  
made

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made light of it himfelfe, and fayd 'twas merelie a suddain Ruff of Blood to the Head, and woulde not be diffuaded from going out; but *Mother* was playnly fmote at the Heart, and having lookt after him with fome anxietie, exclaimed, “ I “ fhall neither meddle nor make “ more in this Bufineffe: your *Fa- “ ther’s* suddain Seizures fhall never “ be layd at my Doore;” and foe left me, till we met at Dinner. After the Cloth was drawne, enters Mr. *Milton*, who goes up to *Mother*, and with Gracefulneffe kifses her Hand; but ſhe withdrewe it pettiſhly, and tooke up her Sewing, on the which he lookt at her wonderingly, and then at me; then at her agayne, as though he woulde reade her whole Character in her Face; which having ſeemed to doe, and to write the ſame in ſome private Page of  
of

of his Heart, he never troubled her or himself with further Comment, but tooke up Matters just where he had left them last. Ere we parted we had some private Conference touching our Marriage, for hastening which he had soe much to say that I coulde not long contend with him, especiallie as I founde he had plainlie made out that *Mother* loved him not. ✕

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House full of Companie, leaving noe Time to write nor think. *Mother* sayth, tho' she cannot forbode an happy Marriage, she will provide for a merrie Wedding, and hathe growne more than commonlie tender to me, and given me some Trinkets, a Piece of fine *Holland* Cloth, and enoughe of green Sattin for a Gown, that will stand on End with its owne Richnesse. She hathe me constantlie  
with

Wednesday.

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with her in the Kitchen, Paftrie, and Store-room, telling me 'tis needfulle I fhoulde improve in Houfewiferie, feeing I fhall foe foone have a Home of my owne.

But I think *Mother* knows not, and I am afeard to tell her, that Mr. *Milton* hath no Houfe of his owne to carry me to, but onlie Lodgings, which have well fuited his Bachelor State, but may not, 'tis likelie, befeeme a Lady to live in. He deems fo himfelf, and fayeth we will look out for an hired Houfe together, at our Leifure. Alle this he hath fayd to me in an Under-tone, in *Mother's* Prefence, ſhe ſewing at the Table and we fitting in the Window; and 'tis difficult to tell how much ſhe hears, for ſhe will afke no *Questions*, and make noe *Comments*, onlie compreffes her Lips, which makes me think ſhe knows.

The

The Children are in turbulent Spiritts; but *Robin* hath done nought but mope and make Moan since he learnt he must soe soone lose me. A Thought hath struck me,—Mr. *Milton* educates his Sister's Sons; two Lads of about *Robin's* Age. What if he woulde consent to take my Brother under his Charge? perhaps *Father* would be willing.

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Last Visitt to *Sheepscote*,—at leaste, as *Mary Powell*; but kind *Rose* and *Roger Agnew* will give us the Use of it for a Week on our Marriage, and spend the Time with dear *Father* and *Mother*, who will neede their Kindnesse. *Rose* and I walked long aboute the Garden, her Arm round my Neck; and she was avised to say,  
 “*Cloth of Frieze, be not too bold,  
 Tho' thou be matcht with Cloth of  
 Gold,—*”

Saturday.

And

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And then craved my Pardon for foe unmannerly a Rhyme, which indeede, methoughte, needed an Excuse, but exprest a Feare that I knew not (what she called) my high Destiny, and prayed me not to trifle with Mr. *Milton's* Feelings nor in his Sichte, as I had done the Daye she dined at *Forest Hill*. I laught, and sayd, he must take me as he found me: he was going to marry *Mary Powell*, not the *Wife Widow of Tekoah*. *Rose* lookt wistfullie, but I bade her take Heart, for I doubted not we shoulde content eache the other; and for the Rest, her Advice shoulde not be forgotten. Thereat, she was pacified.

May 22d.

Alle Bustle and Confusion,—slaying of Poultrie, making of Pastrie, etc. People coming and going, prest to dine and to sup, and refuse, and then



then stay, the colde Meats and Wines  
ever on the Table; and in the Even-  
ing, the Rebeckes and Recorders sent  
for that we may dance in the Hall.  
My Spiritts have been most un-  
equall; and this Evening I was  
overtaken with a suddain Faintnesse,  
such as I never but once before ex-  
perienced. They would let me  
dance no more; and I was quite  
tired enoughe to be glad to sit aparte  
with Mr. *Milton* neare the Doore,  
with the Moon shining on us; untill  
at length he drew me out into the  
Garden. He spake of Happinesse  
and Home, and Hearts knit in Love,  
and of heavenlie Espoufals, and of  
Man being the Head of the Woman,  
and of our *Lord's* Marriage with the  
Church, and of white Robes, and  
the Bridegroom coming in Clouds  
of Glory, and of the Voices of  
singing Men and singing Women,  
and

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and eternall Spring, and eternall Bliffe, and much that I cannot call to Mind, and other-much that I coulde not comprehend, but which was in mine ears as the Song of Birds, or Falling of Waters.

May 23<sup>d</sup>.

*Rose* hath come, and hath kindlie offered to help pack the Trunks, (which are to be sent off by the Waggon to *London*;) that I may have the more Time to devote to *Mr. Milton*. Nay, but he will soon have all my Time devoted to himself, and I would as lief spend what little remains in mine accustomed Haunts, after mine accustomed Fashion. I had purposed a Ride on *Clover* this Morning, with *Robin*; but the poor Boy must I trow be disappointed.

——And for what? Oh me!  
I have hearde such a long Sermon  
on

on Marriage-duty and Service, that I am faine to sit down and weepe. But no, I must not, for they are waiting for me in the Hall, and the Guests are come and the Musick is tuning, and my Lookes must not betray me. — And now farewell, *Journall*; for *Rose*, who first bade me keepe you (little deeming after what Fashion), will now pack you up, and I will not close you with a heavie Strayn. *Robin* is calling me beneath the Window, — *Father* is sitting in the Shade, under the old Pear-tree, seemingly in gay Discourse with *Mr. Milton*. To-morrow the Village-bells will ring for the Marriage of

MARY POWELL.

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*London,*

1643.

*London,*  
*Mr. Russell's, Taylor,*  
*St. Bride's Churchyard.*

Oh Heaven! is this my new Home? my Heart finkes alreadie. After the fwete fresh Ayre of *Sheepscote*, and the Cleanlinefs, and the Quiet and the pleafant Smells, Sightes, and Soundes, alle whereof Mr. *Milton* enjoyed to the Full as keenlie as I, faying they minded him of *Paradife*,—how woulde *Rose* pitie me, could fhe view me in this clofe Chamber, the Floor whereof of dark, uneven Boards, muft have beene layd, methinks, three hundred Years ago; the oaken Pannells, utterlie deftitute of Polish and with fundrie Chinks; the Bed with dull brown Hangings, lined with as dull a greene, occupying Half the Space; and

and Half the Remainder being filled with duftie Books, whereof there are Store alfoe in every other Place. This Mirror, I fhould thinke, belonged to faire *Rofamond*. And this Arm-chair to King *Lear*. Over the Chimnie hangs a ruefull Portrait,—maybe of *Grotius*, but I fhoulde fooner deeme it of fome Worthie before the Flood. Onlie one Quarter of the Cafement will open, and that upon a Proſpect, oh dolefull! of the Churchyarde! Mr. *Milton* had need be as blythe as he was all the Time we were at *Sheepſcote*, or I ſhall be buried in that ſame Churchyarde within the Twelvemonth. 'Tis well he has ſtepped out to ſee a Friend, that I may in his Abſence get ridd of this Fit of the Diſmall. I wiſh it may be the laſt. What would *Mother* ſay to his bringing me to  
ſuch

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such a Home as this? I will not think. Soe this is *London!* How diverse from the “*towred Citie*” of my Husband’s versing! and of his Prose too; for as he spake, by the way, of the Disorders of our Time, which extend even into eache domestick Circle, he sayd that alle must, for a While, appear confused to our imperfect View, just as a mightie Citie unto a Stranger who shoulde beholde around him huge, unfinished Fabrics, the Plan whereof he could but imperfectlie make out, amid the Builders’ disorderlie Apparatus; but that, *from afar*, we mighte perceive glorious Results from party Contentions, — Freedom springing up from Opreffion, Intelligence succeeding Ignorance, Order following Disorder, just as that same Traveller looking at the Citie from a distant Height, should beholde

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beholde Towres, and Spires glistering with Gold and Marble, Streets stretching in lessening Perspectives, and Bridges flinging their white Arches over noble Rivers. But what of this saw we all along the *Oxford* Road? Firstlie, there was noe commanding Height; second, there was the Citie obscured by a drizzling Rain; the Ways were foul, the Faces of those we mett spake less of Pleasure than Business, and Bells were tolling, but none ringing. Mr. *Milton's* Father, a grey-haired, kind old Man, was here to give us welcome: and his firste Words were, "Why, *John*, "thou hast stolen a March on us. "Soe quickly, too, and soe snug! "But she is faire enoughe, Man, to "excuse thee, Royalist or noe."

And soe, taking me in his Arms, kist me franklie. — But I heare  
my

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my Husband's Voice, and another with it.

Thursday.

'Twas a Mr. *Lawrence* whom my Husband brought Home last Nighte to sup; and the Evening passed righte pleasantlie, with News, Jestes, and a little Musicke. Todaye hath been kindlie devoted by Mr. *Milton* to shewing me Sights:—and oh! the strange, diverting Cries in the Streets, even from earlie Dawn! “New Milk and Curds from the Dairie!”—“Olde Shoes for some Brooms!”—Anie Kitchen-stuffe, “have you, Maids?”—“Come buy my greene Herbes!”—and then in the Streets, here a Man preaching, there another juggling: here a Boy with an Ape, there a Show of *Nineveh*: next the News from the North; and as for the China Shops and Drapers in the *Strand*, and the Cook's



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Cook's Shops in *Westminster*, with the smoking Ribs of Beef and fresh Salads set out on Tables in the Street, and Men in white Aprons crying out, "Calf's Liver, Tripe, and hot "Sheep's Feet"—'twas enoughe to make One untimelie hungrie,—or take One's Appetite away, as the Cafe might be. Mr. *Milton* shewed me the noble Minster, with King *Harry* Seventh's Chapel adjoining; and pointed out the old House where *Ben Jonson* died. Neare the *Broade Sanctuarie*, we fell in with a slighte, dark-complexioned young Gentleman of two or three and twenty, whome my Husband espying cryed, "What, *Marvell*?" the other comically answering, "What *Marvel*?" and then, handsomlie saluting me and complimenting Mr. *Milton*, much lighte and pleasant Discourse ensued; and finding we were aboute to take  
Boat,

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Boat, he volunteered to goe with us on the River. After manie Hours' Exercife, I have come Home fatigued, yet well pleased. Mr. *Marvel* fups with us.

Friday.

I wish I could note down a Tithe of the pleafant Things that were fayd laft Nighte. Firft, olde Mr. *Milton* having ftept out with his Son,— I called in *Rachael*, the younger of Mr. *Ruffel's* Serving-maids, (for we have none of our owne as yet, which tends to much Difcomfiture,) and, with her Aide, I dufted the Bookes and fett them up in half the Space they had occupied; then cleared away three large Basketfuls, of the abfolutefte Rubbifh, torn Letters and the like, and fent out for Flowers, (which it feemeth ftrange enoughe to me to *buy*,) which gave the Chamber a gayer Aire, and foe my  
 Husband

Husband sayd when he came in, calling me the fayrest of them alle; and then, sitting down with Gayety to the Organ, drew forthe from it heavenlie Sounds. Afterwards Mr. *Marvell* came in, and they discourfed about *Italy*, and Mr. *Milton* promised his Friend some Letters of Introduction to *Jacopo Gaddi*, *Clementillo*, and others.—

After Supper, they wrote Sentences, Definitions, and the like, after a Fashion of *Catherine de Medici*, some of which I have layd aside for *Rose*.

— To-day we have seene *St. Paul's* faire Cathedral, and the School where Mr. *Milton* was a Scholar when a Boy; thence, to the Fields of *Finsbury*; where are Trees and Windmills enow: a Place much frequented for practising

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tising Archery and other manlie Exercifes.

Saturday.

Tho' we rife betimes, olde Mr. *Milton* is earlier stille; and I always find him fitting at his Table befide the Window (by Reason of the Chamber being foe dark,) fortig I know not how manie Bundles of Papers tied with red Tape; eache fo like the other that I marvel how he knows them aparte. This Morning, I found the poore old Gentleman in fad Distrefs at miffing a Manuscript Song of Mr. *Henry Lawe's*, the onlie Copy extant, which he perfuaded himfelfe that I muft have fent down to the Kitchen Fire Yefterday. I am convinced I difmiff not a fingle Paper that was not torne eache Way, as being utterlie ufeleffe; but as the unluckie Song cannot be founde, he fighs  
and

and is certayn of my Delinquence, as is *Hubert*, his owne Man ; or, as he more frequentlie calls him, his “odd Man ;”—and an odd Man indeede is Mr. *Hubert*, readie to addrefs his Master or Master’s Sonne on the merest Occasion, without waiting to be spoken to ; tho’ he expecteth Others to treat them with far more Deference than he himself payeth.

—Dead tired, this Daye, with so much Exercise ; but woulde not say soe, because my Husband was thinking to please me by shewing me soe much. Spiritts flagging however. These *London* Streets wearie my Feet. We have been over the House in *Aldersgate Street*, the Garden whereof disappointed me, having hearde soe much of it ; but ’tis far better than none, and the House is large enough for Mr. *Milton’s* Familie

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Familie and my *Father's* to boote. Thought how pleafant 'twould be to have them alle aboute me next *Chriftmaffe*; but that holie Time is noe longer kept with Joyfullneffe in *London*. Ventured, therefore, to expresse a Hope, we mighte spend it at *Forest Hill*; but Mr. *Milton* fayd 'twas unlikelie he should be able to leave Home; and askt, would I go alone?—Constrained, for Shame, to say no; but felt, in my Heart, I woulde jump to see *Forest Hill* on anie Terms, I foe love alle that dwell there.

Sunday  
Even.

Private and publick Prayer, Sermons, and Psalm-finging from Morn until Nighte. The onlie Break hath been a Vifit to a quaint but pleafing Quaker Lady, (the first of that Perfuafion I have ever had Speech of,) by Name *Catherine Thompson*, whom  
my

my Husband holds in great Re-  
verence. She said manie Things  
worthy to be remembered; onlie  
*as* I remember them, I need not  
to write them down. Sorrie to be  
caughte napping by my Husband,  
in the Midst of the third long Ser-  
mon. This comes of over-walking,  
and of being unable to sleep o'  
Nights; for whether it be the *Lon-*  
*don* Ayre, or the *London* Methods of  
making the Beds, or the strange  
Noises in the Streets, I know not,  
but I have scarce beene able to close  
my Eyes before Daybreak since I  
came to Town.

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And now beginneth a new Life ;  
for my Husband's Pupils, who were  
dismist for a Time for my Sake,  
returne to their Tasks this Daye,  
and olde Mr. *Milton* giveth Place  
to his two Grandsons, his widowed  
Daughter's

Monday.

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Daughter's Children, *Edward* and *John Philips*, whom my Husband led in to me just now. Two plainer Boys I never sett Eyes on; the one weak-eyed and puny, the other prim and puritanicall—no more to be compared to our sweet *Robin!* \* \* \* After a few Words, they retired to their Books; and my Husband, taking my Hand, sayd in his kindest Manner,—“ And now I leave  
 “ my sweete *Moll* to the pleasant  
 “ Companie of her own goode and  
 “ innocent Thoughtes; and, if she  
 “ needs more, here are both stringed  
 “ and keyed Instruments, and Books  
 “ both of the older and modern  
 “ Time, soe that she will not find  
 “ the Hours hang heavie.” Methoughte how much more I should like a Ride upon *Clover* than all the Books that ever were penned; for the Door no sooner closed upon  
 Mr.



Mr. *Milton* than it seemed as tho' he had taken alle the Sunshine with him; and I fell to cleaning the Casement that I mighte look out the better into the Churchyarde, and then altered Tables and Chairs, and then fate downe with my Elbows resting on the Window-seat, and my Chin on the Palms of my Hands, gazing on I knew not what, and feeling like a Butterflie under a Wine-glafs.

I marvelled why it seemed soe long since I was married, and wondered what they were doing at Home,—could fancy I hearde *Mother* chiding, and see *Charlie* stealing into the Dairie and dipping his Finger in the Cream, and *Kate* feeding the Chickens, and *Dick* taking a Stone out of *Whitestar's* Shoe.

—Methought how dull it was to be passing the best Part of the  
Summer

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Summer out of the Reache of fresh Ayre and greene Fields, and wondered, would alle my future Summers be soe spent?

Thoughte how dull it was to live in Lodgings, where one could not even go into the Kitchen to make a Pudding; and how dull to live in a Town, without some young female Friend with whom one might have ventured into the Streets, and where one could not soe much as feed Colts in a Paddock; how dull to be without a Garden, unable soe much as to gather a Handfulle of ripe Cherries; and how dull to looke into a Church-yarde, where there was a Man digging a Grave!

—When I wearied of staring at the Grave-digger, I gazed at an olde Gentleman and a young Lady slowlie walking along, yet scarce as  
if

if I noted them; and was thinking mostlie of *Forest Hill*, when I saw them stop at our Doore, and presently they were shewn in, by the Name of Doctor and Mistres *Davies*. I sent for my Husband, and entertayned 'em bothe as well as I could, till he appeared, and they were polite and pleasant to me; the young Lady tall and slender, of a cleare brown Skin, and with Eyes that were fine enough; onlie there was a supprest Smile on her Lips alle the Time, as tho' she had seen me looking out of the Window. She tried me on all Subjects, I think; for she started them more adroitlie than I; and taking up a Book on the Window-feat, which was the *Amadigi* of *Bernardo Tasso*, printed alle in *Italiques*, she sayd, if I loved Poetry, which she was sure I must, she knew she shoulde love me. I  
did

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did not tell her whether or noe. Then we were both silent. Then Doctor *Davies* talked vehementlie to Mr. *Milton* agaynst the King; and Mr. *Milton* was not so contrarie to him as I could have wished. Then Mistres *Davies* tooke the Word from her Father and beganne to talke to Mr. *Milton* of *Tasso*, and *Dante*, and *Boiardo*, and *Ariosto*; and then Doctor *Davies* and I were silent. Methoughte, they both talked well, tho' I knew so little of their Subject-matter; onlie they complimented eache other too much. I mean not they were insincere, for eache seemed to think highlie of the other; onlie we neede not say alle we feele.

To conclude, we are to sup with them to-morrow.

Wednesday.

*Journall*, I have Nobodie now but you, to whome to tell my little Griefs;

Griefs ; indeede, before I married, I know not that I had anie ; and even now, they are very small, onlie they are soe new, that sometimes my Heart is like to burst.

—I know not whether 'tis safe to put them alle on Paper, onlie it relieves for the Time, and it kills Time, and perhaps, a little While hence I may looke back and see how small they were, and how they mighte have beene shunned, or better borne. 'Tis worth the Triall.

—Yesterday Morn, for very Wea-  
rinesse, I looked alle over my Linen  
and Mr. *Milton's*, to see could I  
finde anie Thing to mend ; but  
there was not a Stitch amifs. I  
woulde have played on the Spin-  
nette, but was afrayd he should hear  
my indifferent Musick. Then, as  
a last Resource, I tooke a Book—  
*Paul Perrin's Historie of the Wal-*  
*denses ;—*

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*denfes*;—and was, I believe, dozing a little, when I was aware of a continuall Whispering and Crying. I thought 'twas some Child in the Street; and, having some Comfits in my Pocket, I stept softlie out to the House-door and lookt forth, but no Child could I see. Coming back, the Door of my Husband's Studdy being ajar, I was avised to look in; and saw him, with awfuller Brow, raising his Hand in the very Act to strike the youngest *Phillips*. I could never endure to see a Child struck, soe hastilie cryed out, "Oh, don't!"—whereon he rose, and, as if not seeing me, gently closed the Door, and, before I reached my Chamber, I hearde soe loud a Crying that I began to cry too. Soon, alle was quiet; and my Husband, coming in, stept gently up to me, and putting his Arm about my Neck, sayd,  
" My

“ My dearest Life, never agayn, I  
“ beseech you, interfere between  
“ me and the Boys: ’tis as un-  
“ seemlie as tho’ I shoulde interfere  
“ between you and your Maids,—  
“ when you have any,—and will  
“ weaken my Hands, dear *Moll*,  
“ more than you have anie Sus-  
“ picion of.”

I replied, kissing that same of-  
fending Member as I spoke, “ Poor  
“ *Jack* would have beene glad, just  
“ now, if I *had* weakened them.”—  
“ But that is not the *Question*,” he  
returned, “ for we should alle be  
“ glad to escape necessary Punish-  
“ ment; whereas, it is the Power,  
“ not the Penalty of our bad Habits,  
“ that we shoulde seek to be de-  
“ livered from.”—“ There may,”  
I sayd, “ be necessary, but need not  
“ be corporal Punishment.” “ That  
“ is as may be,” returned he, “ and  
hath

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“ hath alreadie been settled by an  
 “ Authoritie to which I submit, and  
 “ partlie think you will not dispute,  
 “ and that is, the Word of *God*.  
 “ Pain of Body is in Realitie, or  
 “ ought to be, sooner over and more  
 “ safelie borne than Pain of an in-  
 “ genuous Mind; and, as to the  
 “ *Shame*,—why, as *Lorenzo de’ Me-*  
 “ *dici* sayd to *Soccini*, ‘ The Shame  
 “ ‘ is in the Offence rather than in  
 “ ‘ the Punishment.’ ”

I replied, “ Our *Robin* had never  
 “ beene beaten for his Studdies;”  
 to which he sayd with a Smile,  
 that even I must admit *Robin* to  
 be noe great Scholar. And so in  
 good Humour left me; but I was  
 in no good Humour, and hoped  
 Heaven might never make me the  
 Mother of a Son, for if I should  
 see Mr. *Milton* strike him, I should  
 learn to hate the Father.—

Learning



1643.

Learning there was like to be Companie at Doctor *Davies*'s, I was avised to put on my brave greene Satin Gown; and my Husband sayd it became me well, and that I onlie needed some Primroses and Cowslips in my Lap, to look like *May*;—and somewhat he added about mine Eyes' "clear shining after Rain," which avised me he had perceived I had beene crying in the Morning, which I had hoped he had not.

Arriving at the Doctor's House, we were shewn into an emptie Chamber; at least, emptie of Companie, but full of every Thing else; for there were Books, and Globes, and stringed and wind Instruments, and stuffed Birds and Beasts, and Things I know not soe much as the Names of, besides an Easel with a Painting by Mrs. *Mildred* on it, which she meant to be seene, or she woulde

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woulde have put it away. Subject, "*Brutus's Judgment:*" which I thought a strange, unfeeling one for a Woman; and did not wish to be *her* Son. Soone she came in, drest with studded and puritanicall Plainnesse; in brown Taffeta, guarded with black Velvet, which became her well enough, but was scarce suited for the Season. She had much to say about limning, in which my Husband could follow her better than I; and then they went to the Globes, and *Copernicus*, and *Galileo Galilei*, whom she called a Martyr, but I do not. For, is a Martyr one who is unwillinglie imprisoned, or who formally recants? even tho' he affecteth afterwards to say 'twas *but* a Form, and cries "*Eppure, si muove?*" The earlier Christians might have sayd 'twas but a Form to burn a Handfull of  
Incense

Incense before *Jove's* Statua; *Pliny* woulde have let them goe.

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Afterwards, when the Doctour came in and engaged my Husband in Discourse, Mistres *Mildred* devoted herselfe to me, and askt what Progresse I had made with *Bernardo Tasso*. I tolde her, none at alle, for I was equallie faultie at *Italiques* and *Italian*, and onlie knew his best Work thro' Mr. *Fairfax's* Translation; whereat she fell laughing, and sayd she begged my Forgive-ness, but I was confounding the Father with the Sonne; then laught agayn, but pretended 'twas not at me but at a Lady I minded her of, who never coulde remember to distinguish betwixt *Lionardo da Vinci* and *Lorenzo dei Medici*. That last Name brought up the Recollection of my Morning's Debate with my Husband, which made me feel sad;  
and

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and then, Mrs. *Mildred*, seeminge anxious to make me forget her Unmannerlinefs, commenced, “Can you paint?”—“Can you fing?”—“Can you play the Lute?”—and, at the laft, “What *can* you do?” I mighte have fayd I coulde comb out my Curls smother than she coulde hers, but did not. Other Guefts came in, and talked fo much agaynft Prelacy and the Right divine of Kings that I woulde fain we had remained at Astronomie and Poetry. For Supper there was little Meat, and noe ftrong Drinks, onlie a thinnifh foreign Wine, with Cakes, Candies, Sweetmeats, Fruits, and Confections. Such, I fuppose, is Town Fashion. At the lafte, came Mufick; Miftrefs *Mildred* fang and played; then preft me to do the like, but I was foe fearfulle, I coulde not; fo my Husband fayd  
he

he woulde play for me, and that woulde be alle one, and foe covered my Bashfulleneffe handsomlie.

Onlie this Morning, just before going to his Studdy, he stept back and fayd, “ Sweet *Moll*, I know you “ can both play and sing—why will “ you not practise? ” I replied, I loved it not much. He rejoyned, “ But you know I love it, and is “ not that a Motive? ” I fayd, I feared to let him hear me, I played so ill. He replied, “ Why, that is “ the very Reason you shoulde seek “ to play better, and I am sure you “ have Plenty of Time. Perhaps, “ in your whole future Life, you “ will not have such a Season “ of Leifure as you have now,— “ a golden Opportunity, which you “ will surelie seize.”—Then added, “ Sir *Thomas More’s* Wife learnt to “ play the Lute, solely that she mighte

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“ mighte please her Husband.” I answered, “ Nay, what to tell me “ of Sir *Thomas More’s* Wife, or of “ *Hugh Grotius’s* Wife, when I was “ the Wife of *John Milton* ?” He looked at me twice, and quicklie, too, at this Saying ; then laughing, cried, “ You cleaving Mischiefe ! I “ hardlie know whether to take that “ Speech amisse or well—however, “ you shall have the Benefit of the “ Doubt.”

And so away laughing ; and I, for very Shame, sat down to the Spinnette for two wearie Hours, till soe tired, I coulde cry ; and when I desisted, coulde hear *Jack* wailing over his Task. ’Tis raining fast, I cannot get out, nor should I dare to go alone, nor where to go to if ’twere fine. I fancy ill Smells from the Churchyard—’tis long to Dinner-time, with noe Change, noe Exercise ;

Exercise; and oh, I sigh for *Forest Hill*.

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—A dull Dinner with Mrs. *Phillips*, whom I like not much. *Christopher Milton* there, who stared hard at me, and put me out of Countenance with his strange Questions. My Husband checked him. He is a Lawyer, and has Wit enoughe.

Mrs. *Phillips* speaking of second Marriages, I unawares hurt her by giving my Voice agaynst them. It seems she is thinking of contracting a second Marriage.

—At Supper, wishing to ingratiate myself with the Boys, talked to them of Countrie Sports, etc.: to which the youngest listened greedilie: and at length I was advised to ask them woulde they not like to see *Forest Hill*? to which the elder replied in his most methodicall  
Manner,

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Manner, "If Mr. *Powell* has a good "Library." For this Piece of Hypocrisie, at which I heartilie laught, he was commended by his Uncle. Hypocrisie it was, for Master *Ned* cryeth over his Taskes pretty nearlie as oft as the youngest.

Friday.

To rewarde my zealous Practice to-day on the Spinnette, Mr. *Milton* produced a Collection of "*Ayres, and Dialogues, for one, two, and three Voices,*" by his Friend Mr. *Harry Lawes*, which he sayd I shoulde find very pleafant Studdy; and then he told me alle about their getting up the Masque of *Comus* in *Ludlow* Castle, and how well the Lady's Song was fung by Mr. *Lawes*' Pupil, the Lady *Alice*, then a sweet, modest Girl, onlie thirteen Yeares of Age,—and he told me of the Singing of a faire *Italian* young Signora, named  
*Leonora*



*Leonora Barroni*, with her Mother and Sister, whome he had hearde at *Rome*, at the Concerts of Cardinal *Barberini*; and how she was “as gentle and modest as sweet *Moll*,” yet not afrayd to open her Mouth, and pronounce everie Syllable distinctlie, and with the proper Emphasis and Passion when she sang. And after this, to my greate Contentment, he tooke me to the *Gray's Inn Walks*, where, the Afternoon being fine, was much Company.

After Supper, I proposed to the Boys that we shoulde tell Stories; and Mr. *Milton* tolde one charminglie, but then went away to write a *Latin* Letter. Soe *Ned's* Turn came next; and I must, if I can, for very Mirthe's Sake, write it down in his exact Words, they were soe pragmaticall.

“ On

1643.

“ On a Daye, there was a certain  
 “ Child wandered forthe, that would  
 “ play. He met a Bee, and sayd,  
 “ ‘ Bee, wilt thou play with me ? ’  
 “ The Bee sayd, ‘ No, I have my  
 “ Duties to perform, tho’ you, it  
 “ woulde seeme, have none. I  
 “ must away to make Honey.’  
 “ Then the Childe, abasht, went  
 “ to the Ant. He sayd, ‘ Will you  
 “ play with me, Ant ? ’ The Ant  
 “ replied, ‘ Nay, I must provide  
 “ against the Winter.’ In shorte,  
 “ he found that everie Bird, Beaste,  
 “ and Insect he accosted, had a closer  
 “ Eye to the Purpose of their Cre-  
 “ ation than himselfe. Then he  
 “ sayd, ‘ I will then back, and con-  
 “ my Task.’—*Moral.* The Moral  
 “ of the foregoing Fable, my deare  
 “ *Aunt*, is this—We must love Work  
 “ better than Play.”

With alle my Interest for Chil-  
 dren,

dren, how is it possible to take any Interest in soe formall a little Prigge?

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Saturday.

I have just done somewhat for Master *Ned* which he could not doe for himselfe—*viz.* tenderly bound up his Hand, which he had badly cut. Wiping away some few naturall Tears, he must needs say, “I am quite ashamed, *Aunt*, you  
“ shoulde see me cry; but the worst  
“ of it is, that alle this Payne has  
“ beene for noe good; whereas,  
“ when my Uncle beateth me for  
“ misconstruing my *Latin*, tho’ I  
“ cry at the time, all the while  
“ I know it is for my Advantage.”  
—If this Boy goes on preaching soe, I shall soon hate him.

—Mr. *Milton* having stepped out before Supper, came back looking soe blythe, that I askt if he had  
hearde

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hearde good News. He sayd, yes : that some Friends had long beene perswading him, against his Will, to make publick some of his *Latin* Poems ; and that, having at length consented to their Wishes, he had beene with *Mosley* the Publisher in *St. Paul's Churchyard*, who agreed to print them. I sayd, I was sorrie I shoulde be unable to read them. He sayd he was sorry too ; he must translate them for me. I thanked him, but observed that Traductions were never soe good as Originalls. He rejoyned, " Nor am I even a " good Translator." I askt, " Why " not write in your owne Tongue ? " He sayd, "*Latin* is understood all " over the Worlde." I sayd, " But " there are manie in your owne " Country do not understand it." He was silent soe long upon that, that I supposed he did not mean  
to

to answer me ; but then cried,  
“ You are right, sweet *Moll*.—Our  
“ best Writers have written their  
“ best Works in *English*, and I will  
“ hereafter doe the same,—for I feel  
“ that my best Work is still *to come*.  
“ Poetry hath hitherto been with  
“ me rather the Recreation of a  
“ Mind conscious of its Health,  
“ than the deliberate Task-work of  
“ a Soule that must hereafter give  
“ an Account of its Talents. Yet  
“ my Mind, in the free Circuit of  
“ her Musing, has ranged over a  
“ thousand Themes that lie, like  
“ the Marble in the Quarry, readie  
“ for anie Shape that Fancy and  
“ Skill may give. Neither Laziness  
“ nor Caprice makes me difficult in  
“ my Choice ; for, the longer I am  
“ in selecting my Tree, and laying  
“ my Axe to the Root, the sounder  
“ it will be and the riper for Use.

Nor

1643.

“ Nor is an Undertaking that shall  
 “ be one of high Duty, to be en-  
 “ tered upon without Prayer and  
 “ Discipline:—it woulde be Pre-  
 “ sumption indeede, to commence  
 “ an Enterprife which I meant  
 “ shoulde delighte and profit every  
 “ instructed and elevated Mind with-  
 “ out so much Paynes-takinge as it  
 “ should cost a poor Mountebank to  
 “ balance a Pole on his Chin.”

Sunday  
 Even.

In the Clouds agayn. At Dinner, to-daye, Mr. *Milton* catechised the Boys on the Morning's Sermon, the Heads of which, though amounting to a Dozen, *Ned* tolde off roundlie. Roguish little *Jack* looked slylie at me, says, “ *Aunt* coulde not tell off “ the Sermon.” “ Why not?” says his Uncle. “ Because she was sleep- “ ing,” says *Jack*. Provoked with the Child, I turned scarlett, and  
 hastilie

hastilie sayd, “I was not.” No-  
bodie spoke; but I repented the  
Falsitie the Moment it had escaped  
me; and there was *Ned*, a folding  
of his Hands, drawing down his  
Mouth, and closing his Eyes. . . .  
My Husband tooke me to taske for  
it when we were alone, soe tenderlie  
that I wept.

1643.

*Jack* sayd this Morning, “I know  
“Something—I know *Aunt* keeps  
“a Journall.” “And a good Thing  
“if you kept one too, *Jack*,” sayd  
his Uncle, “it would shew you how  
“little you doe.” *Jack* was silenced;  
but *Ned*, purfing up his Mouth,  
says, “I can’t think what *Aunt* can  
“have to put in a Journall—should  
“not you like, *Uncle*, to see?”  
“No, *Ned*,” says his Uncle, “I am  
“upon Honour, and your dear *Aunt*’s  
“Journall is as safe, for me, as the  
golden

Monday.

1643.

“ golden Bracelets that King *Alfred*  
 “ hung upon the High-way. I am  
 “ glad she has such a Resource, and,  
 “ as we know she cannot have much  
 “ News to put in it, we may the  
 “ more safely rely that it is a Trea-  
 “ sure of sweet, and high, and holy,  
 “ and profitable Thoughtes.”

Oh, how deeplie I blusht at this  
 ill-deserved Prayse! How sorrie  
 I was that I had ever registered  
 aught that he woulde grieve to  
 read! I secretly resolved that this  
 Daye's Journalling should be the  
 last, untill I had attained a better  
 Frame of Mind.

Saturday  
 Even.

I have kept Silence, yea, even  
 from good Words, but it has beene  
 a Payn and Griefe unto me. Good  
 Mistresse *Catherine Thompson* called  
 on me a few Dayes back, and spoke  
 so wisely and so wholesomelie con-  
 cerning



cerning my Lot, and the Way to make it happy, (she is the first that hath spoken as if 'twere possible it mighte not be soe alreadie,) that I felt for a Season quite heartened; but it has alle faded away. Because the Source of Cheerfulnesse is not *in* me, anie more than in a dull Landkip, which the Sun lighteneth for awhile, and when he has set, its Beauty is gone.

Oh me! how merry I was at Home!—The Source of Cheerfulnesse seemed in me *then*, and why is it not *now*? Partly because alle that I was there taught to think right is here thought wrong; because much that I there thought harmlesse is here thought sinfull; because I cannot get at anie of the Things that employed and interested me *there*, and because the Things within my Reach *here* do not interest me.

Then,

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Then, 'tis no small Thing to be continuallie deemed ignorant and misinformed, and to have one's Errors continuallie covered, however handsomelie, even before Children. To say nothing of the Weight upon the Spiritts at firste, from Change of Ayre, and Diet, and Scene, and Losf of habituall Exercife and Companie and householde Cares. These petty Griefs try me forelie; and when Coufin *Ralph* came in unexpectedlie this Morn, tho' I never much cared for him at Home, yet the Sight of *Rose's* Brother, fresh from *Sheepscote* and *Oxford* and *Forest Hill*, soe upset me that I sank into Tears. No Wonder that Mr. *Milton*, then coming in, shoulde hastilie enquire if *Ralph* had brought ill Tidings from Home; and, finding alle was well there, shoulde look strangelie. He askt *Ralph*, however,

to

to stay to Dinner ; and we had much Talk of Home ; but now, I regret having omitted to ask a thousand Questions.

1643.

Mr. *Milton* in his Closet and I in my Chamber.—For the first Time he seems this Evening to have found out how dissimilar are our Minds. Meaning to please him, I sayd, “ I kept awake bravelie, to-nighte, through that long, long Sermon, for your Sake.”—“ And why not for *God’s* Sake ?” cried he, “ why not for your owne Sake ?—Oh, sweet *Wife*, I fear you have yet much to learn of the Depth of Happiness that is comprised in the Communion between a forgiven Soul and its Creator. It hallows the most secular as well as the most spirituall Employments ; it gives Pleasure that has

Sunday  
Even.  
Aug. 15.

no

1643.

“no after Bitternesse; it gives Pleasure to *God*—and oh! thinke of the Depth of Meaning in those Words! think what it is for us to be capable of giving *God* Pleasure!”

—Much more, in the same Vein! to which I could not, with equal Power, respond; soe, he away to his Study, to pray perhaps for my Change of Heart, and I to my Bed.

Aug. 21,  
Saturday.

Oh Heaven! can it be possible? am I agayn at *Forest Hill*? How strange, how joyfull an Event, tho' brought about with Teares!—Can it be, that it is onlie a Month since I stoode at this Toilette as a Bride? and lay awake on that Bed, thinking of *London*? How long a Month! and oh! this present one will be alle too short.

It

It seemeth that *Ralph Hewlett*, shocked at my Teares and the Alteration in my Looks, broughte back a dismall Report of me to deare *Father* and *Mother*, pronouncing me either ill or unhappie. Thereupon, *Richard*, with his usuall Impetuositie, prevayled on *Father* to let him and *Ralph* fetch me Home for a While, at leaste till after *Michaelmasse*.

1643.

How surprisid was I to see *Dick* enter! My Arms were soe fast about his Neck, and my Face prest soe close to his shoulder, that I did not for a While perceive the grave Looke he had put on. At the last, I was avised to ask what broughte him soe unexpectedlie to *London*; and then he hemmed and looked at *Ralph*, and *Ralph* looked at *Dick*, and then *Dick* sayd bluntly, he hoped Mr. *Milton* woulde spare me to go  
Home

1643.

Home till after *Michaelmasse*, and *Father* had sent him on Purpose to say soe. Mr. *Milton* lookt surpris'd and hurte, and sayd, how could he be expected to part soe soone with me, a Month's Bride? it must be some other Time: he had intended to take me himselve to *Forest Hill* the following Spring, but coulde not spare Time now, nor liked me to goe without him, nor thought I should like it myself. But my Eyes said *I shoulde*, and then he gazed earnestlie at me and lookt hurt; and there was a dead Silence. Then *Dick*, hesitating a little, sayd he was sorrie to tell us my *Father* was ill; on which I clasped my Hands and beganne to weepe; and Mr. *Milton*, changing Countenance, askt fundrie Questions, which *Dick* answered well enough; and then said he woulde not be soe cruel as  
to

to keepe me from a Father I foe dearlie loved, if he were sick, though he liked not my travelling in such unfettled Times with so young a Convoy. *Ralph* sayd they had brought *Diggory* with them, who was olde and steddy enough, and had ridden my *Mother's* Mare for my Use; and *Dick* was for our getting forward a Stage on our Journey the same Evening, but Mr. *Milton* insisted on our abiding till the following Morn, and woulde not be overruled. And gave me leave to stay a Month, and gave me Money, and many kind Words, which I coulde mark little, being foe overtaken with Concern about dear *Father*, whose Illness I feared to be worfe than *Dick* sayd, seeing he seemed foe close and dealt in dark Speeches and Parables. After Dinner, they went forth, they sayd,  
to

1643.

1643.

to look after the Horfes, but I think to see *London*, and returned not till Supper.

We got them Beds in a Houfe hard by, and started at earlie Dawn.

Mr. *Milton* kissed me moft tenderlie agayn and agayn at parting, as though he feared to lose me; but it had seemed to me soe hard to brook the Delay of even a few Hours when *Father*, in his Sicknesse, was wanting me, that I took leave of my Husband with lesse Affection than I mighte have shewn, and onlie began to find my Spiritts lighten when we were fairly quit of *London* with its vile Sewers and Drains, and to breathe the sweete, pure Morning Ayre, as we rode swiftlie along. *Dick* called *London* a vile Place, and spake to *Ralph* concerning what they had seene of it overnichte, whence it appeared to me, that he had  
beene



beene pleasure-seeking more than, in *Father's* state, he ought to have beene. But *Dick* was always a reckless Lad;—and oh, what Joy, on reaching this deare Place, to find *Father* had onlie beene suffering under one of his usual Stomach Attacks, which have no Danger in them, and which *Dick* had exaggerated, fearing *Mr. Milton* woulde not otherwise part with me;—I was a little shocked, and coulde not help scolding him, though I was the gainer; but he boldlie defended what he called his “Stratagem of War,” saying it was quite allowable in dealing with a *Puritan*.

As for *Robin*, he was wild with Joy when I arrived; and hath never ceased to hang about me. The other Children are riotous in their Mirth. Little *Joscelyn* hath returned from his Foster-mother's Farm, and  
is

1643.

1643.

is noe longer a puny Child—'tis thought he will thrive. I have him constantly in my Arms or riding on my Shoulder; and with Delight have revifited alle my olde Haunts, patted *Clover*, &c. Deare *Mother* is moft kind. The Maids as oft call me Mrs. *Molly* as Mrs. *Milton*, and then fmile, and beg Pardon. *Rofe* and *Agnew* have been here, and have made me promife to vifit *Sheepscote* before I return to *London*. The whole Houfe feems full of Glee.

Monday.

It feemes quite ftrange to heare *Dick* and *Harry* finging loyal Songs and drinking the *King's* Health after foe recentlie hearing his M. foe continuallie fpoken agaynft. Also, to fee a Lad of *Robin's* Age, coming in and out at his Will, doing anie-thing or nothing; inftead of being  
ever

ever at his Taskes, and looking at Meal-times as if he were repeating them to himselfe. I know which I like best.

A most kind Letter from Mr. *Milton*, hoping *Father* is better, and praying for News of him. How can I write to him without betraying *Dick*? *Robin* and I rode, this Morning, to *Sheepscote*. Thoughte Mr. *Agnew* received me with unwonted Gravitie. He tolde me he had received a Letter from my Husband, praying news of my Father, seeing I had sent him none, and that he had writ to him that *Father* was quite well, never had been better. Then he sayd to me he feared Mr. *Milton* was labouring under some false Impression. I tolde him trulie, that *Dick*, to get me Home, had exaggerated a trifling Illness of *Father's*, but that I was  
guiltlesse

1643.

1643.

guiltlesse of it. He sayd *Dick* was inexcusable, and that noe good End coulde justifie a Man of Honour in overcharging the Truth; and that, since I was innocent, I shoulde write to my Husband to clear myself. I said briefly, I woulde; and I mean to do soe, onlie not to-daye. Oh, sweet countrie Life! I was made for you and none other. This riding and walking at one's owne free Will, in the fresh pure Ayre, coming in to earlie, heartie, wholesome Meals, seasoned with harmlesse Jests,—seeing fresh Faces everie Daye come to the House, knowing everie Face one meets out of Doores,—supping in the Garden, and remainig in the Ayre long after the Moon has risen, talking, laughing, or perhaps dancing,—if this be not Joyfulnessse, what is?

For certain, I woulde that Mr.

*Milton*

*Milton* were here; but he would call our Sports mistimed, and throw a Damp upon our Mirth by not joining in it. Soe I will enjoy my Holiday while it lasts, for it may be long ere I get another—especiallie if his and *Father's* opinions get wider afunder, as I think they are doing already. My promised Spring Holiday may come to nothing.

1643.

My Husband hath writ to me strangely, chiding me most unkindly for what was noe Fault of mine, to wit, *Dick's* Falstie; and wondering I can derive anie Pleasure from a Holiday so obtayned, which he will not curtail, but will on noe Pretence extend. Nay! but methinks Mr. *Milton* presumeth somewhat too much on his marital Authoritie, writing in this Strayn. I am no  
mere

Monday.

1643.

mere Child neither, nor a runaway Wife, nor in such bad Companie, in mine own Father's House, where he firſte ſaw me; and, was it anie Fault of mine, indeed, that *Father* was not ill? or can I wiſh he had beene? No, truly!

This Letter hath forelie vexed me. Dear *Father*, ſeeing me ſoe dulle, aſkt me if I had had bad News. I ſayd I had, for that Mr. *Milton* wanted me back at the Month's End. He ſayd, lightlie, Oh, that muſt not be, I muſt at all Events ſtay over his Birthdaye, he could not ſpare me ſooner; he woulde ſettle all that. Let it be ſoe then—I am content enoughe.

To change the Current of my Thoughts, he hath renewed the Scheme for our Viſit to Lady *Falkland*, which, Weather permitting, is to take Place to-morrow. 'Tis long

long since I have seene her, soe I am willing to goe; but she is dearer to *Rose* than to me, though I respect her much.

1643.

The whole of Yesterday occupyde with our Visitt. I love Lady *Falkland* well, yet her religious Mellanchollie and Presages of Evil have left a Weight upon my Spiritts. To-daye, we have a Family Dinner. The *Agnews* come not, but the *Merediths* doe, we shall have more Mirthe if lesse Wit. My Time now draweth soe short, I must crowd into it alle the Pleasure I can; and in this, everie one conspires to help me, saying, "Poor *Moll* must soon "return to *London*." Never was Creature soe petted or spoylt. How was it there was none of this before I married, when they might have me alwaies? ah, therein lies the Secret.

Wednesday.

1643.

Secret. Now, we have mutuallie tasted our Loffe.

*Ralph Hewlett*, going agayn to Town, was avised to ask whether I had anie Commiffion wherewith to charge him. I bade him tell *Mr. Milton* that since we should meet foe soone, I need not write, but would keep alle my News for our Fire-side. *Robin* added, "Say, "we cannot spare her yet," and *Father* echoed the same.

But I begin to feel now, that I must not prolong my Stay. At the leaste, not beyond *Father's* Birthday. My Month is hasting to a Close.

Sept. 21.

Battle at *Newbury*—Lord *Falkland* slayn. Oh, fatal Lofs! *Father* and *Mother* going off to my Lady: but I think she will not see them. Aunt and Uncle *Hewlett*, who brought the News, can talk of nothing else.

Alle



Alle Sadnesse and Confternation.  
I am wearie of bad News, public  
and private, and feel les and les  
Love for the Puritans, yet am forced  
to seem more loyal than I really am,  
foe high runs party Feeling just now  
at Home.

1643.  
Sept. 22.

My Month has passed !

A most displeas'd Letter from  
my Husband, minding me that  
my Leave of Absence hath expired,  
and that he likes not the Messages  
he received through *Ralph*, nor  
the unreasonable and hurtfulle Pas-  
times which he finds have beene  
making my quiet Home distaste-  
fulle. Asking, are they suitable,  
under Circumstances of nationall  
Confternation to *my owne* Party, or  
seemlie in foe young a Wife, apart  
from her Husband? To conclude,  
insisting, with more Authoritie than  
Kindnesse,

Sept. 28.

1643.

Kindnesse, on my immediate Return.

With Tears in my Eyes, I have beene to my Father. I have tolde him I must goe. He sayth, Oh no, not yet. I persisted, I must, my Husband was soe very angry. He rejoined, What, angry with my sweet *Moll*? and for spending a few Days with her old Father? Can it be? hath it come to this already? I sayd, my Month had expired. He sayd, Nonsense, he had always askt me to stay over *Michaelmasse*, till his Birthday; he knew *Dick* had named it to Mr. *Milton*. I sayd, Mr. *Milton* had taken no Notice thereof, but had onlie granted me a Month. He grew peevish, and said “Pooh, “pooh!” Thereat, after a Silence of a Minute or two, I sayd yet agayn, I must goe. He took me by the two Wrists and sayd, Doe you wish  
to

to go? I burſt into Teares, but made noe Anſwer. He ſayd, That is Anſwer enough,—how doth this Puritan carry it with you, my Child? and ſnatched his Letter. I ſayd, Oh, don't read that, and would have drawn it back; but *Father*, when heated, is impoſſible to controwl; therefore, quite deaf to Entreaty, he would read the Letter, which was unfit for him in his chafed Mood; then, holding it at Arm's Length, and ſmiting it with his Fiſt,—Ha! and is it thus he dares addreſs a Daughter of mine? (with Words added, I dare not write)—but be quiet, *Moll*, be at Peace, my Child, for he ſhall not have you back for awhile, even though he come to fetch you himſelf. The maddeſt Thing I ever did was to give you to this Roundhead. He and *Roger Agnew* talked me over in ſoe many  
fine

1643.

1643.

fine Words.—What possessed me, I know not. Your Mother always said evil would come of it. But as long as thy Father has a Roof over his Head, Child, thou hast a Home.

As soone as he would hear me, I begged him not to take on foe, for that I was not an unhappy Wife; but my Tears, he sayd, belied me; and indeed, with Fear and Agitation, they flowed fast enough. But I sayd, I *must* goe home, and wished I had gone sooner, and would he let *Diggory* take me! No, he sayd, not a Man Jack on his Land should faddle a Horse for me, nor would he lend me one, to carry me back to Mr. *Milton*; at the leaste not for a While, till he had come to Reason, and protested he was sorry for having writ to me soe harshly.

“ Soe be content, *Moll*, and make  
“ not two Enemies instead of one.  
Goe,

“Goe, help thy Mother with her  
“clear-ftarching. Be happy whilst  
“thou art here.”

1643.

But ah! more eafily faid than  
done. “Alle Joy is darkened; the  
“Mirthe of the Land is gone!”

At Squire *Paice's* grand Dinner  
we have been counting on foe many  
Days; but it gave me not the Plea-  
fure expected.

Michael-  
masse Day.

The Weather is foe foul that I  
am fure Mr. *Milton* woulde not like  
me to be on the Road, even woulde  
my Father let me goe.

Oct. 13.

—While writing the above, heard  
very angrie Voices in the Court-  
yard, my Father's especiallie, louder  
than common; and distinguished  
the words “Knave,” and “Varlet,”  
and “begone.” Lookt from my  
Window and beheld a Man, booted  
and

1643.

and cloaked, with two Horses, at the Gate, parleying with my Father, who stood in an offensive Attitude, and woulde not let him in. I could catch such Fragments as, “ But, “ Sir !” “ What ! in such Weather “ as this ?” “ Nay, it had not over- “ cast when I started.” “ ’Tis foul “ enough now, then.” “ Let me “ but have speech of my Mistress.” “ You crosse not my Threshold.” “ Nay, Sir, if but to give her this “ Letter :”—and turning his Head, I was avised of its being *Hubert*, old Mr. *Milton’s* Man ; doubtless sent by my Husband to fetch me. Seeing my Father raise his Hand in angrie Action (his Riding-whip being in it), I hasted down as fast as I could, to prevent Mischiefe, as well as to get my Letter ; but, unhappilie, not soe fleetlie as to see more than *Hubert’s* flying Skirts as he galloped from  
from

from the Gate, with the led Horſe by the Bridle; while my Father flinging downe the torne Letter, walked paſſionatelie away. I claſped my Hands, and ſtood mazed for a while,—was then aviſed to piece the Letter, but could not; onlie making out ſuch Words as “Sweet *Moll,*” in my Huſband’s Writing.

1643.

*Rofe* came this Morning, through Rain and Mire, at ſome Riſk as well as much Inconvenience, to intreat of me, even with Teares, not to vex Mr. *Milton* by anie farther Delays, but to return to him as ſoon as poſſible. Kind Soule, her Affection toucht me, and I affured her the more readilie I intended to return Home as ſoone as I coulde, which was not yet, my Father having taken the Matter into his own Hands, and permitting me noe Eſcort;

Oct. 14.

1643.

Escort; but that I questioned not, Mr. *Milton* was onlie awaiting the Weather to settle, to fetch me himself. That he will doe so, is my firm Persuasion. Meanwhile, I make it my Duty to joyn with some Attempt at Cheerfullenesse in the Amusements of others, to make my Father's Confinement to the House less irksome; and have in some Measure succeeded.

Oct. 23.

Noe Sichte nor Tidings of Mr. *Milton*.—I am uneasie, frightened at myself, and wish I had never left him, yet hurte at the Neglect. *Hubert*, being a crabbed Temper, made Mischiefe on his Return, I fancy. *Father* is vexed, methinks, at his owne Passion, and hath never, directlie, spoken, in my Hearing, of what passed; but rayleth continuallie agaynst Rebels and Roundheads.



Roundheads. As to *Mother*,—ah me.

1643.

Thro' dank and miry Lanes and Bye-roads with *Robin*, to *Sheepscote*.

Oct. 24.

Waiting for *Rose* in Mr. *Agnew's* small Studdy, where she mostlie sitteth with him, oft acting as his Amanuensis, was avised to take up a printed Sheet of Paper that lay on the Table; but finding it to be of *Latin* Versing, was about to laye it downe agayn, when *Rose* came in. She changed Colour, and in a faltering Voice sayd, “ Ah, *Cousin*, do “ you know what that is? One of “ your Husband's Prooffe Sheets. I “ woulde that it coulde interest you “ in like manner as it hath me.” Made her noe Answer, laying it aside enconcernedlie, but secretlie felt, as I have oft done before, how stupid it is not to know *Latin*, and resolved  
to

1643.

to get *Robin* to teach me. He is noe greate Scholar himfelfe, foe will not shame me.—I am wearie of hearing of War and Politicks; foe will try Studdy for a while, and see if 'twill cure this dull Payn at my Heart.

Oct. 28.

*Robin* and I have shut ourfelves up for three Hours dailie, in the small Book-room, and have made fayre Progreffe. He liketh his Office of Tutor mightilie.

Oct. 31.

My Lessons are more crabbed, or I am more dull and inattentive, for I cannot fix my Minde on my Book, and am secretlie wearie. *Robin* wearies too. But I will not give up as yet; the more foe as in this quiete Studdy I am out of Sichte and Hearinge of fundrie young Officers *Dick* is continuallie bringing over from *Oxford*, who spend manie  
Hours

Hours with him in Countrie Sports, and then come into the Houfe, hungry, thirftie, noifie, and idle. I know Mr. *Milton* woulde not like them.

1643.

—Surelie he will come foone?— I fayd to *Father* laft Night, I wanted to hear from Home. He fayd, “Home! Dost call yon Taylor’s “Shop your Home?” foe ironicalle that I was shamed to fay more.

Woulde that I had never married! —then coulde I enjoy my Childhoode’s Home. Yet I knew not its Value before I quitted it, and had even a stupid Pleasure in anticipating another. Ah me! had I loved Mr. *Milton* more, perhaps I might better have endured the Taylor’s Shop.

*Sheepscote, Nov. 20.*

Annoyed by *Dick’s* Companions, I prayed *Father* to let me stay awhile with *Rose*; and gaining his Consent, came

Nov. 20.

1643.

came over here Yester-morn, without thinking it needfulle to send Notice, which was perhaps inconsiderate. But she received me with Kisses and Words of Tenderesse, though less Smiling than usuale, and eagerlie accepted mine offered Visitt. Then she ran off to find *Roger*, and I heard them talking earnestlie in a low Voice before they came in. His Face was grave, even stern, when he entred, but he held out his Hand, and sayd, “Mistress  
“*Milton*, you are welcome! how is  
“it with you? and how was Mr.  
“*Milton* when he wrote to you  
“last?” I answered brieflie, he was well: then came a Silence, and then *Rose* took me to my Chamber, which was sweet with Lavender, and its hangings of the whitest. It reminded me too much of my first Week of Marriage, soe I resolved to think  
not

not at all left I shoulde be bad  
Companie, but cheer up and be  
gay. Soe I askt *Rose* a thousand  
Questions about her Dairie and Bees,  
laught much at Dinner, and told  
Mr. *Agnew* fundrie of the merrie  
Sayings of *Dick* and his *Oxford*  
Friends. And, for my Reward, when  
we were afterwards apart, I heard  
him tell *Rose* (by Reason of the Walls  
being thin) that however she might  
regard me for old Affection's sake,  
he thought he had never knowne  
foe unpromising a Character. This  
made me dulle enoughe all the rest  
of the Evening, and repent having  
come to *Sheepscote*: however, he  
liked me the better for being quiete:  
and *Rose*, being equallie chekt, we  
sewed in Silence while he read to  
us the first Division of *Spencer's*  
*Legend of Holinesse*, about *Una* and  
the Knight, and how they got fun-  
dered

1643.

1643.

dered. This led to much serious, yet not unpleasing, Discourse, which lasted till Supper. For the first Time at *Sheepscote*, I could not eat, which Mr. *Agnew* observing, prest me to take Wine, and *Rose* would start up to fetch some of her Preserves; but I chekt her with a Motion, not being quite able to speak; for their being soe kind made the Teares ready to starte, I knew not why.

Family Prayers, after Supper, rather too long; yet though I could not keep up my Attention, they seemed to spread a Calm and a Peace alle about, that extended even to me; and though, after I had undressed, I sat a long while in a Maze, and bethought me how piteous a Creature I was, yet, once layed down, I never sank into deeper, more composing Sleep.

This

This Morning, *Rose* exclaimed,  
 “ Dear *Roger* ! onlie think ! *Moll*  
 “ has begun to learn *Latin* since she  
 “ returned to *Forest Hill*, thinking  
 “ to surprife Mr. *Milton* when they  
 “ meet.” “ She will not onlie sur-  
 “ prife but *please* him,” returned  
 dear *Roger*, taking my Hand very  
 kindlie ; “ I can onlie fay, I hope  
 “ they will meet long before she  
 “ can read his *Poemata*, unless she  
 “ learnes much faster than most  
 “ People.” I replied, I learned  
 very slowly, and wearied *Robin’s*  
 Patience ; on which *Rose*, kissing  
 me, cried, “ You will never wearie  
 “ mine ; foe, if you please, deare  
 “ *Moll*, we will goe to our Lessons  
 “ here everie Morning ; and it may  
 “ be that I shall get you through  
 “ the Grammar faster than *Robin*  
 “ can. If we come to anie Diffi-  
 “ cultie we shall refer it to *Roger*.”

Now

1643.  
 Nov. 21.

1643.

Now, Mr. *Agnew's* Looks exprest such Pleasure with both, that it were difficult to tell which felt the most elated; soe calling me deare *Moll* (he hath hitherto Mistress *Miltoned* me ever since I sett Foot in his House), he sayed he would not interrupt our Studdies, though he should be within Call, and soe left us. I had not felt soe happy since *Father's* Birthday; and, though *Rose* kept me close to my Book for two Hours, I found her a far less irksome Tutor than deare *Robin*. Then she went away, singing, to make *Roger's* favourite Dish, and afterwards we took a brisk Walke, and came Home hungrie enoughe to Dinner.

There is a daily Beauty in *Rose's* Life, that I not onlie admire, but am readie to envy. Oh! if *Milton* lived but in the poorest House in  
the



the Countrie, methinks I coulde be very happy with him.

1643.

Chancing to make the above Remark to *Rose*, she cried, “And why not be happy with him in *Aldersgate Street?*” I briefly replied that he must get the House first, before it were possible to tell whether I coulde be happy there or not. *Rose* stared, and exclaimed, “Why, where do you suppose him to be now?” “Where but at the Taylor’s in *St. Bride’s Church-yard?*” I replied. She claspt her Hands with a Look I shall never forget, and exclaimed in a sort of vehement Passion, “Oh, *Cousin*, *Cousin*, how you throw your own Happiness away! How awfulle a Pause must have taken place in your Intercourse with the Man whom you promised to abide by  
till

Bedtime.

1643.

“ till Death, since you know not  
 “ that he has long since taken pos-  
 “ session of his new Home; that he  
 “ strove to have it ready for you at  
 “ *Michaelmasse!*”

Doubtlesse I lookt noe lesf surprised than I felt;—a suddain Prick at the Heart prevented Speech; but it shot acrossse my Heart that I had made out the Words “ Aldersgate ” and “ new Home, ” in the Fragments of the Letter my Father had torn. *Rose*, misjudging my Silence, burst forth anew with, “ Oh, “ *Cousin! Cousin!* coulde anie Home, “ however dull and noisefome, drive “ me from *Roger Agnew?* Onlie “ think of what you are doing,—of “ what you are leaving undone!— “ of what you are preparing against “ yourself! To put the Wicked- “ nesse of a selfish Course out of the “ Account, onlie think of its Mellancholie,

“ cholie, its Misericordie,—destitute of  
 “ alle the sweet, bright, fresh Well-  
 “ springs of Happinesse ;—unblest  
 “ by *God!*”

1643.

Here *Rose* wept passionately, and claspt her Arms about me ; but, when I began to speak, and to tell her of much that had made me miserable, she hearkened in motionlesse Silence, till I told her that *Father* had torn the Letter and beaten the Messenger. Then she cried, “ Oh, I see now what may and shall  
 “ be done! *Roger* shall be Peace-  
 “ maker,” and ran off with Joyfulness ; I not withholding her. But I can never be joyfuller more—he cannot be Day’s-man betwixt us now—’tis alle too late!

Now that I am at *Forest Hill* agayn, I will essay to continue my Journalling.—

Nov. 28.

Mr.

1643.

Mr. *Agnew* was out; and though a keene wintry Wind was blowing, and *Rose* was suffering from Colde, yet she went out to listen for his Horse's Feet at the Gate, with onlie her Apron cast over her Head. Shortlie, he returned; and I heard him say in a troubled Voice, "Alle  
"are in Arms at *Forest Hill*." I felt soe greatlie shocked as to neede to sit downe instead of running forthe to learn the News. I supposed the parliamentary Soldiers had advanced, unexpectedlie, upon *Oxford*. His next Words were, "*Dick* is  
"coming for her at Noone—poor  
"Soul, I know not what she will  
"doe—her Father will trust her  
"noe longer with you and me." Then I saw them both passe the Window, slowlie pacing together, and hastened forth to joyn them; but they had turned into the pleached Alley,

Alley, their Backs towards me ; and both in such earnest and apparentlie private Communication, that I dared not interrupt them till they turned aboute, which was not for some While ; for they stood for some Time at the Head of the Alley, still with their Backs to me, *Rose's* Hair blowing in the cold Wind ; and once or twice she seemed to put her Kerchief to her Eyes.

Now, while I stood mazed and uncertain, I hearde a distant Clatter of Horse's Feet, on the hard Road a good way off, and could descric *Dick* coming towards *Sheepscote*. *Rose* saw him too, and commenced running towards me ; Mr. *Agnew* following with long Strides. *Rose* drew me back into the House, and sayd, kissing me, " Dearest *Moll*, I " am soe sorry ; *Roger* hath seen " your Father this Morn, and he will

1643.

“ will on no Account spare you to  
“ us anie longer ; and *Dick* is coming  
“ to fetch you even now.” I sayd,  
“ Is *Father* ill ?” “ Oh no,” replied  
Mr. *Agnew* ; then coming up, “ He  
“ is not ill, but he is perturbed at  
“ something which has occurred ;  
“ and, in Truth, soe am I.—But  
“ remember, *Mistress Milton*, re-  
“ member, dear *Cousin*, that when  
“ you married, your *Father’s* Guar-  
“ dianship of you passed into the  
“ Hands of your Husband—your  
“ Husband’s House was thenceforthe  
“ your Home ; and in quitting it  
“ you committed a Fault you may  
“ yet repaire, though this offensive  
“ Act has made the Difficultie much  
“ greater.”—“ Oh, what has hap-  
“ pened ?” I impatientlie cried.  
Just then, *Dick* comes in with his  
usual blunt Salutations, and then  
cries, “ Well, *Moll*, are you ready  
to

“to goe back?” “Why should I  
“be?” I sayd, “when I am soe  
“happy here? unless *Father* is ill,  
“or Mr. *Agnew* and *Rose* are tired  
“of me.” They both interrupted,  
there was nothing they soe much  
desired, at this present, as that I  
shoulde prolong my Stay. And you  
know, *Dick*, I added, that *Forest  
Hill* is not soe pleasant to me just  
now as it hath commonlie beene, by  
Reason of your *Oxford* Companions.  
He brieflie sayd, I neede not mind  
that, they were coming no more to  
the House, *Father* had decreed it.  
And you know well enough, *Moll*,  
that what *Father* decrees, must be,  
and he hath decreed that you must  
come Home now; soe no more  
Ado, I pray you, but fetch your  
Cloak and Hood, and the Horses  
shall come round, for ’twill be late  
ere we reach Home. “Nay, you  
must

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“ must dine here at all Events,”  
sayd *Rose*; “ I know, *Dick*, you love  
“ roast Pork.” Soe *Dick* relented.  
Soe *Rose*, turning to me, prayed me  
to bid *Cicely* hasten Dinner; the  
which I did, tho’ thinking it strange  
*Rose* should not goe herself. But, as  
I returned, I hearde her say, Not a  
Word of it, dear *Dick*, at the least,  
till after Dinner, lest you spoil her  
Appetite. Soe *Dick* sayd he shoulde  
goe and look after the Horses. I  
sayd then, brisklie, I see somewhat  
is the Matter—pray tell me what it  
is. But *Rose* looked quite dull, and  
walked to the Window. Then Mr.  
*Agnew* sayd, “ You seem as dissa-  
“ tisfied to leave us, *Cousin*, as we  
“ are to lose you; and yet you are  
“ going back to *Forest Hill*—to that  
“ Home in which you will doubt-  
“ lesse be happy to live all your  
“ Dayes.”—“ At *Forest Hill*?” I  
sayd,



sayd, “oh no! I hope not.” “And  
“why?” sayd he quicklie. I hung  
my Head, and muttered, “I hope,  
“some Daye, to goe back to Mr.  
“*Milton.*” “And why not at  
“once?” sayd he. I sayd, “*Father*  
“would not let me.” “Nay, that  
“is childish,” he answered, “your  
“Father could not hinder you if  
“you wanted not the Mind to goe  
“—it was your first seeming foe  
“loth to return, that made him  
“think you unhappie and refuse to  
“part with you.” I sayd, “And  
“what if I were unhappie?” He  
paused; and knew not at the Moment  
what Answer to make, but shortlie  
replied by another Question, “What  
“Cause had you to be foe?” I sayd,  
“That was more easly askt than  
“answered, even if there were anie  
“Neede I shoulde answer it, or he  
“had anie Right to ask it.” He cried  
in

1643.

in an Accent of Tenderneſſe that ſtill wrings my Heart to remember, “ Oh, queſtion not the Right! I “ only wiſh to make you happy. “ Were you not happy with Mr. “ *Milton* during the Week you ſpent “ together here at *Sheepſcote* ? ” Thereat I coulde not refrayn from burſting into Tears. *Roſe* now ſprang forward; but Mr. *Agnew* ſayd, “ Let her weep, let her weep, “ it will do her good.” Then, alle at once it occurred to me that my Huſband was awaiting me at Home, and I cried, “ Oh, is Mr. *Milton* at “ *Foreſt Hill* ? ” and felt my Heart full of Gladneſs. Mr. *Agnew* answered, “ Not ſoe, not ſoe, poor “ *Moll* : ” and, looking up at him, I ſaw him wiping his Brow, though the Daye was ſoe chill. “ As well “ tell her now,” ſayd he to *Roſe*; and then taking my Hand, “ Oh, Mrs.

“ Mrs. *Milton*, can you wonder that  
“ your Husband should be angry?  
“ How can you wonder at anie Evil  
“ that may result from the Provoca-  
“ tion you have given him? What  
“ Marvell, that since you cast him  
“ off, all the sweet Fountains of  
“ his Affections would be embittered,  
“ and that he should retaliate by  
“ seeking a Separation, and even a  
“ Divorce?”—There I stopt him  
with an Outcry of “ Divorce?”  
“ Even soe,” he most mournfully  
replyd, “ and I seeke not to excuse  
“ him, since two Wrongs make not  
“ a Right.” “ But,” I cried, pas-  
sionately weeping, “ I have given  
“ him noe Cause; my Heart has  
“ never for a Moment strayed to  
“ another, nor does he, I am sure,  
“ expect it.” “ Ne’erthelesse,” en-  
joynd Mr. *Agnew*, “ he is soe  
“ aggrieved and chafed, that he has  
followed

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“ followed up what he confiders  
 “ your Breach of the Marriage  
 “ Contract by writing and publishing  
 “ a Book on Divorce; the Tenor  
 “ of which coming to your Father’s  
 “ Ears, has violently incensed him.  
 “ And now, dear *Cousin*, having, by  
 “ your Waywardness, kindled this  
 “ Flame, what remains for you but  
 “ to—nay, hear me, hear me, *Moll*,  
 “ for *Dick* is coming in, and I may  
 “ not let him hear me urge you to  
 “ the onlie Course that can regayn  
 “ your Peace—Mr. *Milton* is still  
 “ your Husband; each of you have  
 “ now Something to forgive; do  
 “ you be the firste; nay, seeke *his*  
 “ Forgivenessse, and you shall be  
 “ happier than you have been yet.”

—But I was weeping without  
 controule; and *Dick* coming in,  
 and with *Dick* the Dinner, I askt  
 to be excused, and soe foughte my  
 Chamber,

Chamber, to weep there without Restraynt or Witnesse. Poor *Rose* came up, as soone as she coulde leave the Table, and told me she had eaten as little as I, and woulde not even presse me to eat. But she carest me and comforted me, and urged in her owne tender Way alle that had beene sayd by Mr. *Agnew*; even protesting that if she were in my Place, she woulde not goe back to *Forest Hill*, but straight to *London*, to entreat with Mr. *Milton* for his Mercy. But I told her I could not do that, even had I the means for the Journey; for that my Heart was turned against the Man who coulde, for the venial Offence of a young Wife, in abiding too long with her old Father, not onlie cast her off from his Love, but hold her up to the World's Blame and Scorn, by making their domestic Quarrel  
the

1643.

the Matter for a printed Attack. *Rose* sayd, "I admit he is wrong, " but indeed, indeed, *Moll*, you are " wrong too, and you were wrong " *first*:" and she sayd this soe often, that at length we came to crosser Words; when *Dick*, calling to me from below, would have me make haste, which I was glad to doe, and left *Sheepscote* less regretfullie than I had expected. *Rose* kist me with her gravest Face. Mr. *Agnew* put me on my Horse, and sayd, as he gave me the Rein, " Now think! " now think! even yet!" and then, as I silently rode off, " *God* blefs " you."

I held down my Head; but, at the Turn of the Road, lookt back, and saw him and *Rose* watching us from the Porch. *Dick* cried, " I " am righte glad we are off at last, " for *Father* is downright crazie  
aboute

“aboute this Buſineſſe, and miſtruſt-  
 “fulle of *Agnew's* influence over  
 “you,”—and would have gone on  
 railing, but I bade him for Pitie's  
 Sake be quiete.

1643.

The Effects of my owne Follie,  
 the Loſſe of Home, Huſband, Name,  
 the Opinion of the *Agnews*, the  
 Opinion of the Worlde, roſe up  
 agaynſt me and almoſt drove me  
 mad. And, juſt as I was thinking  
 I had better lived out my Dayes and  
 dyed earlie in *St. Bride's Churchyarde*  
 than that alle this ſhould have come  
 about, the ſudden Recollection of  
 what *Roſe* had that Morning tolde  
 me, which ſoe manie other Thoughts  
 had driven out of my Head, viz.  
 that Mr. *Milton* had, in his Deſire  
 to pleaſe me, while I was onlie bent  
 on pleaſing myſelf, been ſecretly  
 ſtriving to make readie the *Alderſgate*  
*Street* Houſe agaynſt my Return,—  
 ſoe

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foe overcame me, that I wept as I rode along. Nay, at the Corner of a branch Road, had a Mind to beg *Dick* to let me goe to *London*; but a glance at his dogged Countenance sufficed to foreshow my Answer.

Half dead with Fatigue and Griefe when I reached Home, the tender Embraces of my Father and Mother completed the Overthrowe of my Spiritts. I tooke to my Bed; and this is the first Daye I have left it; nor will they let me fend for *Rose*, nor even tell her I am ill.

1644.

Jan. 1.

The new Year opens drearily, on Affairs both publick and private. The Loaf parted at Breakfast this Morning, which, as the Saying goes, is a Sign of Separation; but *Mother* onlie sayd 'twas because it was badly kneaded, and chid *Margery*. She hath beene telling me, but now,  
how



how I mighte have 'scaped all my Troubles, and seene as much as I woulde of her and *Father*, and yet have contented Mr. *Milton* and beene counted a good Wife. Noe Advice foe ill to bear as that which comes too late.

1644.

I am sick of this journalling, foe shall onlie put downe the Date of *Robin's* leaving Home. *Lord* have Mercy on him, and keepe him in Safetie. This is a shorte Prayer; therefore, easier to be often repeated. When he kissed me, he whispered, "*Moll*, pray for me."

Jan. 7.

*Father* does not seeme to misse *Robin* much, tho' he dailie drinks his Health after that of the King. Perhaps he did not misse me anie more when I was in *London*, though it was true and naturall enough he should

Jan. 27.

1644.

should like to see me again. We should have been used to our Separation by this Time; there would have been nothing corroding in it. . . . .

I pray for *Robin* every Night. Since he went, the House has lost its Sunshine. When I was so anxious to return to *Forest Hill*, I never counted on his leaving it.

Feb. 1.

Oh Heaven, what would I give to see the Skirts of Mr. *Milton's* Garments again! My Heart is sick unto Death. I have been reading some of my *Journall*, and tearing out much childish Nonsense at the Beginning; but could not destroy the painful Records of the last Year. How unhappy a Creature am I!—wearie, wearie of my Life, yet no Ways inclined for Death. *Lord*, have Mercy upon me.

I spend much of my Time, now, in the Book-room, and, though I essay not to pursue the *Latin*, I read much *English*, at the least, more than ever I did in my Life before; but often I fancy I am reading when I am onlie dreaming. *Oxford* is far too gay a Place for me now ever to goe neare it, but my Brothers are much there, and *Father* in his Farm, and *Mother* in her Kitchen; and the Neighbours, when they call, look on me strangely, so that I have noe Love for them. How different is *Rose's* holy, seclused, yet cheerefulle Life at *Sheepscote*! She hath a Nurserie now, soe cannot come to me, and *Father* likes not I should goe to her.

They say their Majestyes' Parting at *Abingdon* was very sorrowfulle and tender. The *Lord* send them  
better

1644.  
March 27.

April 5.

1644.

better Times! The Queen is to my Mind a most charming Lady, and well worthy of his Majesty's Affection; yet it seems to me amisse, that thro' her Influence, last Summer, the Opportunitie of Pacification was lost. But she was elated, and naturallie enoughe, at her personall Successes from the Time of her landing. To me, there seems nothing soe good as Peace. I know, indeede, Mr. *Milton* holds that there may be such Things as a holy War and a cursed Peace.

April 10.

*Father*, having a Hoarseness, hath deputed me, of late, to read the Morning and Evening Prayers. How beautifulle is our Liturgie! I grudge at the Puritans for having abolished it; and though I felt not its comprehensive Fullness before I married, nor indeed till now, yet

I wearied to Death in *London* at the puritanicall Ordinances and Conscience-meetings and extempore Prayers, wherein it was soe oft the Speaker's Care to show Men how godly he was. Nay, I think Mr. *Milton* altogether wrong in the View he takes of praying to *God* in other Men's Words; for doth he not doe soe, everie Time he followeth the Sense of another Man's extempore Prayer, wherein he is more at his Mercy and Caprice than when he hath a printed Form set down, wherein he sees what is coming?

1644.

Walking in the Home-clofe this Morning, it occurred to me that Mr. *Milton* intended bringing me to *Forest Hill* about this Time; and that if I had abided patientlie with him through the Winter, we might now have beene both here happily together;

June 8.

1644.

together; untroubled by that Sting which now poisons everie Enjoyment of mine, and perhaps of his. *Lord*, be merciful to *me a Sinner*.

June 23.

Just after writing the above, I was in the Garden, gathering a few Coronation Flowers and Sops-in-Wine, and thinking they were of deeper crimson at *Sheepscote*, and wondering what *Rose* was just then about, and whether had I beene born in her Place, I shoulde have beene as goode and happy as she,—when *Harry* came up, looking somewhat grave. I sayd, “What is the Matter?” He gave Answer, “*Rose* hath lost her Child.” Oh! —that we should live but a two Hours’ Journey apart, and that she coulde lose a Child three Months olde *whom I had never seene?*

I ran to *Father*, and never left off praying

praying him to let me goe to her till he consented.

1644.

—What, and if I had begged as hard, at the firste, to goe back to Mr. *Milton*? might he not have consented *then*?

. . . Soe *Harry* took me; and as we drew neare *Sheepscote*, I was avised to think how grave, how barely friendly had beene our last Parting; and to ponder, would *Rose* make me welcome now? The Infant, *Harry* tolde me, had beene dead some Dayes; and, as we came in Sight of the little grey old Church, we saw a Knot of People coming out of the Churchyard, and guesed the Baby had just beene buried. Soe it proved—Mr. *Agnew's* House-door stood ajar; and when we tapped softlie and *Cicely* admitted us, we could see him standing by *Rose*, who was sitting on the Grave  
and

1644.

and crying as if she would not be comforted. When she hearde my Voice, she started up, flung her Arms about me, crying more bitterlie than before, and I cried too; and Mr. *Agnew* went away with *Harry*. Then *Rose* sayd to me, “You must “not leave me agayn.” . . . .

. . . . In the Cool of the Evening, when *Harry* had left us, she took me into the Churchyarde, and scattered the little Grave with Flowers; and then continued sitting beside it on the Graffe, quiete, but not comfortlesse. I am avised to think she prayed. Then Mr. *Agnew* came forthe and sate on a flat Tombstone hard by; and without one Word of Introduction took out his *Psalter*, and commenced reading the Psalms for that Evening’s Service; to wit, the 41st, the 42d, the 43de; in a low solemne Voice; and methoughte



I never in my Life hearde aniething  
to equall it in the Way of Confola-  
tion. *Rose's* heavie Eyes graduallie  
lookt up from the Ground into her  
Husband's Face, and thence up to  
Heaven. After this, he read, or  
rather repeated, the Collect at the  
end of the Buriall Service, putting  
this Expresssion,—“As our Hope is,  
“ this our deare Infant doth.” Then  
he went on to say in a soothing  
Tone, “There hath noe Misfortune  
“ happened to us, but such as is  
“ common to the Lot of alle Men.  
“ We are alle Sinners, even to the  
“ youngest, fayrest, and seeminglie  
“ purest among us; and Death  
“ entered the World by Sin, and,  
“ constituted as we are, we would  
“ not, even if we could, dispense  
“ with Death. For, where doth it  
“ convey us? From this burthen-  
“ some, miserable World, into the  
generall

1644.

1644.

“ generall Assemblie of *Christ's* First-  
 “ born, to be united with the Spiritts  
 “ of the Just made perfect, to par-  
 “ take of everie Enjoyment which  
 “ in this World is unconnected with  
 “ Sin, together with others that are  
 “ unknowne and unspeakable. And  
 “ there, we shall agayn have *Bodies*  
 “ as well as Soules; Eyes to see,  
 “ but not to shed Tears; Voices to  
 “ speak and sing, not to utter La-  
 “ mentations; Hands, to doe *God's*  
 “ Work; Feet, and it may be,  
 “ Wings, to carry us on his Errands.  
 “ Such will be the Blessedness of his  
 “ glorified Saints; even of those  
 “ who, having been Servants of  
 “ Satan till the eleventh Hour,  
 “ laboured penitentlie and diligentlie  
 “ for their heavenlie Master one  
 “ Hour before Sunset; but as for  
 “ those who, dying in mere Infancie,  
 “ never committed actuall Sin, they  
 follow

“ follow the Lamb whithersoever  
 “ he goeth! ‘ Oh, think of this,  
 “ dear *Rose*, and Sorrow not as those  
 “ without Hope; for be assured,  
 “ your Child hath more reall Reason  
 “ to be grieved for you, than you  
 “ for *him*.’ ”

1644..

With this, and like Discourse, that distilled like the Dew, or the small Rain on the tender Grass, did *Roger Agnew* comfort his Wife, untill the Moon had risen. Likewise he spake to us of those who lay buried arounde, how one had died of a broken Heart, another of suddain Joy, another had let Patience have her perfect Work through Years of lingering Disease. Then we walked slowlie and composedlie Home, and ate our Supper peacefullie, *Rose* not refusing to eat, though she took but little.

Since that Evening, she hath,  
 at

1644.

at Mr. *Agnew's* Wish, gone much among the Poor, reading to one, working for another, carrying Food and Medicine to another; and in this I have borne her Companie. I like it well. Methinks how pleasant and seemlie are the Duties of a country Minister's Wife! a God-fearing Woman, that is, who considereth the Poor and Needy, insteade of aiming to be frounced and purfled like her richest Neighbours. Mr. *Agnew* was reading to us, last Night, of *Bernard Gilpin*—he of whom the *Lord Burleigh* sayd, “Who can blame that Man for not “accepting a Bishopric?” How charmed were we with the Description of the Simplicitie and Hospitalitie of his Method of living at *Houghton*!—There is another Place of nearlie the same Name, in *Buckinghamshire*—not *Houghton*, but  
*Horton*,

*Horton*, . . . . where one Mr. *John Milton* spent five of the best Years of his Life,—and where methinks his Wife could have been happier with him than in *St. Bride's Church-yard*.—But it profits not to wish and to will.—What was to be, had Need to be, soe there's an End.

1644.

Aug. 1.

Mr. *Agnew* sayd to me this Morning, somewhat gravelie, “ I observe, “ *Cousin*, you seem to consider your-  
 “ selfe the Victim of Circumstances.”  
 “ And am I not?” I replied. “ No,”  
 he answered, “ Circumstance is a  
 “ false God, unrecognised by the  
 “ Christian, who contemns him,  
 “ though a stubborn yet a profitable  
 “ Servant.”—“ That may be alle  
 “ very grand for a Man to doe,”  
 I sayd. “ Very grand, but very  
 “ feasible, for a Woman as well as  
 “ a Man,” rejoined Mr. *Agnew*, and  
 we

1644.

“ we shall be driven to the Wall  
“ alle our Lives, unless we have  
“ this victorious Struggle with Cir-  
“ cumstances. I seldom allude,  
“ *Cousin*, to yours, which are almoste  
“ too delicate for me to meddle  
“ with; and yet I hardlie feele  
“ justified in letting soe many Op-  
“ portunities escape. Do I offend?  
“ or may I go on?—Onlie think,  
“ then, how voluntarilie you have  
“ placed yourself in your present  
“ uncomfortable Situation. The  
“ Tree cannot resist the graduall  
“ Growth of the Mofs upon it;  
“ but you might, anie Day, anie  
“ Hour, have freed yourself from  
“ the equallie graduall Formation  
“ of the Net that has enclosed you  
“ at last. You entered too hastilie  
“ into your firste — nay, let that  
“ pass, — you gave too shorte a  
“ Triall of your new Home before  
you

“ you became disgusted with it.  
“ Admit it to have beene dull, even  
“ unhealthfulle, were you justified  
“ in forsaking it at a Month’s  
“ End? But your Husband gave  
“ you Leave of Absence, though  
“ obtayned on false Pretences.—  
“ When you found them to be false,  
“ should you not have cleared your-  
“ self to him of Knowledge of the  
“ Deceit? Then your Leave, soe  
“ obtayned, expired—shoulde you  
“ not have returned then?—Your  
“ Health and Spiritts were re-  
“ cruited; your Husband wrote to  
“ reclaim you—shoulde you not  
“ have returned then? He pro-  
“ vided an Escort, whom your  
“ Father beat and drove away.—  
“ If you had insisted on going to  
“ your Husband, might you not  
“ have gone *then*? Oh, *Cousin*, you  
“ dare not look up to Heaven and  
fay

1644.

1644.

“ say you have been the Victim of  
“ Circumstances.”

I made no Answer; onlie felt  
much moven, and very angrie. I  
sayd, “ If I wished to goe back,  
“ Mr. *Milton* woulde not receive me  
“ now.”

“ Will you try?” sayd *Roger*.  
“ Will you but let me try? Will  
“ you let me write to him?”

I had a Mind to say “ Yes.”—  
Insteade, I answered “ No.”

“ Then there’s an End,” cried he  
sharplie. “ Had you made but one  
“ fayre Triall, whether succesfulle  
“ or noe, I coulde have been fatisfied  
“ —no, not fatisfied, but I woulde  
“ have esteemed you, coulde have  
“ taken your Part. As it is, the  
“ les I say just now, perhaps, the  
“ better. Forgive me for having  
“ spoken at alle.”

——Afterwards, I hearde him  
say



fay to *Rose* of me, “ I verilie  
 “ believe there is Nothing in her  
 “ on which to make a permanent  
 “ Impreffion. I verilie think ſhe  
 “ loves everie one of thoſe long  
 “ Curls of hers more than ſhe loves  
 “ Mr. *Milton*.”

(Note :—I will cut them two  
 Inches ſhorter to-night. And they  
 will grow all the faſter.)

. . . . Oh, my ſad Heart, *Roger  
 Agnew* hath pierced you at laſt !

I was moved, more than he  
 thought, by what he had ſayd in  
 the Morning ; and, in writing down  
 the Heads of his Speech, to kill  
 Time, a kind of Reſentment at  
 myſelfe came over me, unlike to  
 what I had ever felt before ; in ſpite  
 of my Folly about my Curls.  
 Seeking for ſome Trifle in a Bag  
 that had not been ſhaken out ſince  
 I brought it from *London*, out  
 tumbled

164.

tumbled a Key with curious Wards — I knew it at once for one that belonged to a certayn Algum-wood Casket Mr. *Milton* had Recourſe to dailie, becauſe he kept ſmall Change in it; and I knew not I had brought it away! 'Twas worked in Groteſque, the Casket, by *Benvenuto*, for *Clement* the Seventh, who for ſome Reaſon woulde not have it; and ſoe it came ſomehow to *Clementillo*, who gave it to Mr. *Milton*. Thought I, how uncomfortable the Loſs of this Key muſt have made him! he muſt have needed it a hundred Times! even if he hath bought a new Casket, I will for it he habituallie goes agayn and agayn to the old one, and then he remembers that he loſt the Key the ſame Day that he loſt his Wife. I heartilie wiſh he had it back. Ah, but he feels not the one Loſs

as

as he feels the other. Nay, but it is as well that one of them, tho' the Lesser, should be repaired. 'Twill shew Signe of Grace, my thinking of him, and may open the Way, if *God* wills, to some Interchange of Kindnesse, however fleeting.

Soe I foughte out Mr. *Agnew*, tapping at his Studdy Doore. He sayd, "Come in," drylie enoughe; and there were he and *Rose* reading a Letter. I sayd, "I want you to write for me to Mr. *Milton*." He gave a four Look, as much as to say he disliked the Office; which threw me back, as 'twere; he having foe lately propos'd it himself. *Rose's* Eyes, however, dilated with sweete Pleasure, as she lookt from one to the other of us.

"Well,—I fear 'tis too late," sayd he at length reluctantlie, I mighte almost

1644.

almost say gruffly,—“ what am I to  
“ write ?”

“ To tell him I have this Key,”  
I made Answer faltering.

“ That Key!” cried he.

“ Yes, the Key of his Algum-  
“ wood Casket, which I knew not  
“ I had, and which I think he must  
“ miss dailie.”

He lookt at me with the utmost  
Impatience. “ And is that alle?”  
he sayd.

“ Yes, alle,” I sayd trembling.

“ And have you nothing more to  
“ tell him?” sayd he.

“ No—” after a Pause, I replied.  
*Rose's* Countenance fell.

“ Then you must ask some one  
“ else to write for you, Mrs. *Milton*,”  
burst forthe *Roger Agnew*, “ unless  
“ you choose to write for yourself.  
“ I have neither Part nor Lot in  
“ it.”

I burste forthe into Teares.

—“ No, *Rose*, no,” repeated Mr. *Agnew*, putting aside his Wife, who woulde have interceded for me,—  
“ her Teares have noe Effect on me  
“ now—they proceed, not from a  
“ contrite Heart, they are the Tears  
“ of a Child that cannot brook to  
“ be chidden for the Waywardnesse  
“ in which it persifts.”

“ You doe me Wrong everie  
“ Way,” I sayd; “ I came to you  
“ willing and desirous to doe what  
“ you yourfelfe woulde, this Morn-  
“ ing, have had me doe.”

“ But in how strange a Way!”  
cried he. “ At a Time when anie  
“ Renewal of your Intercourse re-  
“ quires to be conducted with the  
“ utmost Delicacy, and even with  
“ more Shew of Concession on your  
“ Part than, an Hour ago, I should  
“ have deemed needfulle,—to pro-  
pose

1644.

“ pose an abrupt, trivial Communi-  
 “ cation about an old Key!”

“ It needed not to have been  
 “ abrupt,” I sayd, “ nor yet trivial ;  
 “ for I meant it to have beene  
 “ exprest kindlie.”

“ You said not that before,”  
 answered he.

“ Because you gave me not Time.  
 “ —Because you chid me and fright-  
 “ ened me.”

He stood silent, some While, upon  
 this ; grave, yet softer, and mechani-  
 callie playing with the Key, which  
 he had taken from my Hand. *Rose*  
 looking in his Face anxiously. At  
 lengthe, to disturbe his Reverie, she  
 playfulle tooke it from him, saying,  
 in School-girl Phrase,

“ This is the Key of the  
 Kingdom !”

“ Of the Kingdom of Heaven,  
 “ it mighte be!” exclaimed *Roger*,  
 if

“ if we knew how to use it aright !  
 “ If we knew but how to fit it to  
 “ the Wards of *Milton's* Heart !—  
 “ there's the Difficultie . . . . a  
 “ greater one, poor *Moll*, than you  
 “ know; for hithertoe, alle the Re-  
 “ luctance has been on your Part.  
 “ But now . . . .”

1644.

“ What now ?” I anxiously askt.

“ We were talking of you but as  
 “ you rejoyned us,” sayd Mr. *Agnew*,  
 “ and I was telling *Rose* that hithertoe  
 “ I had considered the onlie Obstacle  
 “ to a Reunion arose from a false  
 “ Impression of your own, that Mr.  
 “ *Milton* could not make you happy.  
 “ But now I have been led to the  
 “ Conclusion that you cannot make  
 “ *him* foe, which increases the Diffi-  
 “ cultie.”

After a Pause, I sayd, “ What  
 “ makes you think foe ?”

“ You and he have made me  
 think

1644.

“ think foe,” he replied. “ First for  
 “ yourself, dear *Moll*, putting aside  
 “ for a Time the Consideration of  
 “ your Youth, Beauty, Franknesse,  
 “ Mirthfullenesse, and a certayn girl-  
 “ ish Drollerie and Mischiefe that are  
 “ all very well in fitting Time and  
 “ Place,—what remains in you for  
 “ a Mind like *John Milton’s* to repose  
 “ upon? what Stabilitie? what Sym-  
 “ pathie? what steadfast Principle?  
 “ You take noe Pains to apprehend  
 “ and relish his favourite Pursuits;  
 “ you care not for his wounded  
 “ Feelings, you consult not his In-  
 “ terests, anie more than your owne  
 “ Duty. Now, is such the Cha-  
 “ racter to make *Milton* happy?”

“ No one can answer that but  
 “ himself,” I replied, deeplie mor-  
 tyfide.

“ Well, he *has* answered it,” sayd  
 Mr. *Agnew*, taking up the Letter  
 he



he and *Rose* had beene reading when I interrupted them . . . . “ You  
“ must know, *Cousin*, that his and  
“ my close Friendship hath beene a  
“ good deal interrupted by this  
“ Matter. ’Twas under my Roof  
“ you met. *Rose* had imparted to  
“ me much of her earlie Interest  
“ in you. I fancied you had good  
“ Dispositions which, under mas-  
“ terlie Trayning, would ripen into  
“ noble Principles; and therefore  
“ promoted your Marriage as far as  
“ my Interest with your Father had  
“ Weight. I own I was surpris’d  
“ at his easilie obtayned Consent. . . .  
“ but, that *you*, once domesticated  
“ with such a Man as *John Milton*,  
“ shoulde find your Home unin-  
“ teresting, your Affections free to  
“ stray back to your owne Family,  
“ was what I had never contem-  
“ plated.”

Here

1644.

Here I made a Show of taking the Letter, but he held it back.

“ No, *Moll*, you disappointed us  
 “ everie Way. And, for a Time,  
 “ *Rose* and I were ashamed, *for* you  
 “ rather than of you, that we left  
 “ noe Means neglected of trying to  
 “ preserve your Place in your Huf-  
 “ band’s Regard. But you did not  
 “ bear us out; and then he beganne  
 “ to take it amiffie that we upheld  
 “ you. Soe then, after some warm  
 “ and cool Words, our Correspond-  
 “ ence languished; and hath but  
 “ now beene renewed.”

“ He has written us a most kind  
 “ Condolence,” interrupted *Rose*,  
 “ on the Death of our Baby.”

“ Yes, most kindlie, most nobly  
 “ exprest,” sayd Mr. *Agnew*; “ but  
 “ what a Conclusion!”

And then, after this long Pre-  
 amble, he offered me the Letter,  
 the

the Beginning of which, tho' doubt-  
lesse well enough, I marked not,  
being impatient to reach the latter  
Part; wherein I found myself spoken  
of soe bitterlie, soe harshlie, as that  
I too plainly saw *Roger Agnew* had  
not beene beside the Mark when he  
decided I could never make Mr.  
*Milton* happy. Payned and wounded  
Feeling made me lay aside the Letter  
without proffering another Word,  
and retreat without soe much as  
a Sigh or a Sob into mine own  
Chamber; but noe longer could the  
Restraynt be maintained. I fell to  
weeping soe passionatelie that *Rose*  
prayed to come in, and condoled  
with me, and advised me, soe as that  
at length my weeping bated, and I  
promised to return below when I  
shoulde have bathed mine Eyes and  
smoothed my Hair; but I have not  
gone down yet.

1644.  
Bedtime.

I think I shall send to *Father* to have me home at the Beginning of next Week. *Rose* needes me not, now; and it cannot be pleasant to *Mr. Agnew* to see my sorrowfulle Face about the House. His Re-proofe and my Husband's together have riven my Heart; I think I shall never laugh agayn, nor smile but after a piteous Sorte; and soe People will cease to love me, for there is Nothing in me of a graver Kind to draw their Affection; and soe I shall lead a moping Life unto the End of my Dayes.

—Luckilie for me, *Rose* hath much Sewing to doe; for she hath undertaken with great Energie her Labours for the Poore, and consequentlie spends les Time in her Husband's Studdy; and, as I help her to the best of my Means, my Sewing hides my Lack of Talking,  
and

and Mr. *Agnew* reads to us such Books as he deems entertayning; yet, half the Time, I hear not what he reads. Still, I did not deeme so much Amusement could have beene found in Books; and there are some of his, that, if not soe cumbrous, I woulde fain borrow.

1644.

I have made up my Mind now, that I shall never see Mr. *Milton* more; and am resolved to submit to it without another Tear.

Friday.

*Rose* sayd, this Morning, she was glad to see me more composed; and soe am I; but never was more miserable.

Mr. *Agnew's* religious Services at the End of the Week have alwaies more than usuall Matter and Meaning in them. They are neither soe drowfy as those I have beene for  
manie

Saturday  
Night.

1644.

manie Years accustomed to at Home, nor soe wearisome as to remind me of the *Puritans*. Were there manie such as he in our Church, soe faithfulle, fervent, and thoughtfulle, methinks there would be fewer Schismaticks; but still there would be some, because there are alwaies some that like to be the uppermost.

. . . . To-nighte, Mr. *Agnew's* Prayers went straight to my Heart; and I privilie turned fundrie of his generall Petitions into particular ones, for myself and *Robin*, and also for Mr. *Milton*. This gave such unwonted Relief, that since I entered into my Closet, I have repeated the same particularlie; one Request seeming to grow out of another, till I remained I know not how long on my Knees, and will bend them yet agayn, ere I go to Bed.

How sweetlie the Moon shines  
through

through my Casement to-night! I am almoste avised to accede to *Rose's* Request of staying here to the End of the Month:—everie Thing here is foe peacefulle; and *Forest Hill* is dull, now *Robin* is away.

1644.

How blessed a Sabbath!—Can it be, that I thought, onlie two Days back, I shoulde never know Peace agayn? Joy I may not, but Peace I can and doe. And yet nought hath amended the unfortunate Condition of mine Affairs; but a different Colouring is caste upon them—the *Lord* grant that it may last! How hath it come foe, and how may it be preserved? This Morn, when I awoke, 'twas with a Sense of Relief such as we have when we miss some wearying bodilie Payn; a Feeling as though I had beene forgiven, yet not by *Mr. Milton*, for I knew he had

Sunday  
Evening.

1644.

had not forgiven me. Then, it must be, I was forgiven by *God*; and why? I had done nothing to get his Forgiveness, only presumed on his Mercy to ask manie Things I had noe Right to expect. And yet I felt I *was* forgiven. Why then mighte not Mr. *Milton* some Day forgive me? Should the Debt of ten thousand Talents be cancelled, and not the Debt of a hundred Pence? Then I thought on that same Word, Talents; and considered, had I ten, or even one? Decided to consider it at leisure, more closelie, and to make over to *God* henceforthe, be they ten, or be it one. Then, dressed with much Composure, and went down to Breakfast.

Having marked that Mr. *Agnew* and *Rose* affected not Companie on this Day, spent it chieflie by myself, except at Church and Meal-times; partlie



partlie in my Chamber, partlie in the Garden Bowre by the Bee-hives. Made manie Resolutions, which, in Church, I converted into Prayers and Promises. Hence, my holy Peace.

1644.

*Rose* proposed, this Morning, we shoulde resume our Studdies. Felt loath to comply, but did soe nevertheless, and afterwards we walked manie Miles, to visit some poor Folk. This Evening, Mr. *Agnew* read us the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. How lifelike are the Portraitures! I mind me that Mr. *Milton* shewed me the *Talbot* Inn, that Day we crost the River with Mr. *Marvell*.

Monday.

How heartilie do I wish I had never read that same Letter!—or rather, that it had never beene written. Thus it is, even with our  
Wishes.

Tuesday.

1644.

Wishes. We think ourselves reasonable in wishing some small Thing were otherwise, which it were quite as impossible to alter as some great Thing. Neverthelesse I cannot help fretting over the Remembrance of that Part wherein he spake such bitter Things of my “most un-  
“governed Passion for Revellings  
“and Junketings.” Sure, he would not call my Life too merrie now, could he see me lying wakefulle on my Bed, could he see me preventing the Morning Watch, could he see me at my Prayers, at my Books, at my Needle. . . . He shall find he hath judged too hardlie of poor *Moll*, even yet.

Wednesday.

Took a cold Dinner in a Basket with us to-day, and ate our rusticall Repast on the Skirt of a Wood, where we could see the Squirrels at  
theire

theire Gambols. Mr. *Agnew* lay on the *Grasse*, and *Rose* took out her Knitting, whereat he laught, and sayd she was like the *Dutch* Women, that must knit, whether mourning or feasting, and even on the Sabbath. Having laught her out of her Work, he drew forth Mr. *George Herbert's* Poems, and read us a Strayn which pleased *Rose* and me soe much, that I shall copy it herein, to have always by me.

*How fresh, oh Lord; how sweet and  
clean*

*Are thy Returns! e'en as the Flowers  
in Spring,*

*To which, beside theire owne De-  
mesne,*

*The late pent Frosts Tributes of Plea-  
sure bring.*

*Grief melts away like Snow in May,  
As if there were noe such cold Thing.*

*Who*

1644.

*Who would have thought my shrivelled  
Heart*

*Woulde have recovered greenness? it  
was gone*

*Quite Underground, as Flowers depart  
To see their Mother-root, when they  
have blown,*

*Where they together, alle the hard  
Weather,*

*Dead to the World, keep House alone.*

*These are thy Wonders, Lord of Power!  
Killing and quickening, bringing down  
to Hell*

*And up to Heaven, in an Hour,  
Making a Chiming of a passing Bell.*

*We say amifs "this or that is;"  
Thy Word is alle, if we could spell.*

*Oh that I once past changing were!  
Fast in thy Paradise, where no Flowers  
can wither;*

*Manie*

*Manie a Spring I shoot up faire,  
Offering at Heaven, growing and  
groaning thither,  
Nor doth my Flower want a Spring  
Shower,  
My Sins and I joyning together.*

1644.

*But while I grow in a straight Line,  
Still upwards bent, as if Heaven were  
my own,  
Thy Anger comes, and I decline.—  
What Frost to that? What Pole is  
not the Zone  
Where alle Things burn, when thou  
dost turn,  
And the least Frown of thine is shewn?*

*And now, in Age, I bud agayn,  
After soe manie Deaths, I bud and  
write,  
I once more smell the Dew and Rain,  
And relish Versing! Oh my onlie  
Light!*

*It*

1644.

*It cannot be that I am he  
On whom thy Tempests fell alle Night?*

*These are thy Wonders, Lord of Love,  
To make us see we are but Flowers  
that glide,*

*Which, when we once can feel and  
prove,*

*Thou hast a Garden for us where to  
bide.*

*Who would be more, swelling their  
Store,*

*Forfeit their Paradise by their Pride.*

Thursday.

*Father sent over Diggory with a  
Letter for me from deare Robin:  
alsoe, to ask when I was minded to  
return Home, as Mother wants to  
goe to Sandford. Fixed the Week  
after next; but Rose says I must be  
here agayn at the Apple-gathering.  
Answered Robin's Letter. He look-  
eth not for Choyce of fine Words;  
nor*

nor noteth an Error here and there  
in the Spelling.

1644.

Life flows away here in such un-  
marked Tranquilitie, that one hath  
Nothing whereof to write, or to  
remember what distinguished one  
Day from another. I am sad, yet  
not dulle; methinks I have grown  
some Yeares older since I came here.  
I can fancy elder Women feeling  
much as I doe now. I have Nothing  
to desire, Nothing to hope, that is  
likelie to come to pass—Nothing to  
regret, except I begin soe far back,  
that my whole Life hath neede, as  
'twere, to begin over agayn. . . .

Tuesday.

Mr. *Agnew* translates to us Portions  
of *Thuanus* his Historie, and the  
Letters of *Theodore Beza*, concerning  
the *French* Reformed Church; oft  
prolix, yet interesting, especially  
with Mr. *Agnew's* Comments, and  
Allusions

1644.

Allusions to our own Time. On the other Hand, *Rose* reads *Davila*, the sworne Apologifte of *Catherine de' Medicis*, whose charming *Italian* even I can comprehend; but alle is false and plausible. How sad, that the wrong Partie shoulde be victorious! Soe it may befall in this Land; though, indeede, I have hearde soe much bitter Rayling on bothe Sides, that I know not which is right. The Line of Demarcation is not soe distinctly drawn, methinks, as 'twas in *France*. Yet it cannot be right to take up Arms agaynst constituted Authorities?— Yet, and if those same Authorities abuse their Trust? Nay, Women cannot understand these Matters, and I thank Heaven they need not. Onlie, they cannot help siding with those they love; and sometimes those they love are on opposite Sides.

Mr.



1644.

Mr. *Agnew* sayth, the fecular Arm shoulde never be employed in spirituall Matters, and that the *Hugenots* committed a grave Mistake in choosing Princes and Admirals for their Leaders, insteade of simple Preachers with Bible in their Hands; and he askt, “ did *Luther* or *Peter* “ the Hermit most manifestlie labour “ with the Blessing of *God*?”

. . . . I have noted the Heads of Mr. *Agnew's* Readings, after a Fashion of *Rose's*, in order to have a shorte, comprehensive Account of the Whole; and this hath abridged my journalling. It is the more profitable to me of the two, changes the sad Current of Thought, and, though an unaccustomed Task, I like it well.

On *Monday* I returned to *Forest Hill*. I am well pleased to have yet another

Saturday.

1644.

another *Sheepscode* Sabbath. To-day we had the rare Event of a Dinner-guest; foe full of what the Rebels are doing, and alle the Horrors of Strife, that he seemed to us quiete Folks, like the Denizen of another World.

*Forest Hill, August 3.*

Aug. 3.

Home agayn, and *Mother* hath gone on her long intended Vifitt to Uncle *John*, taking with her the two youngest. *Father* much preoccupide, by reason of the Supplies needed for his Majesty's Service; foe that, sweet *Robin* being away, I find myselfe lonely. *Harry* rides with me in the Evening, but the Mornings I have alle to myself; and when I have fulfilled *Mother's* Behests in the Kitchen and Still-room, I have nought but to read in our somewhat scant Collection of  
Books,

1644.

Books, the moſte Part whereof are religious. And (not on that Account, but by reaſon I have read the moſt of them before), methinks I will write to borrow ſome of *Rofe*; for Change of Reading hath now become a Want. I am minded alſo, to ſeek out and miniſter unto ſome poore Folk after her Faſhion. Now that I am Queen of the Larder, there is manie a wholeſome Scrap at my Diſpoſal, and there are likewiſe fundrie Phyſiques in my Mother's Cloſet, which ſhe addeth to Year by Year, and never wants, we are ſoe ſeldom ill.

Dear *Father* ſayd this Evening, as we came in from a Walk on the Terrace, “ My ſweet *Moll*, you were  
“ ever the Light of the Houſe; but  
“ now, though you are more ſtaid  
“ than of former Time, I find you  
a

Aug. 5.

1644.

“ a better Companion than ever.  
 “ This last Visitt to *Sheepscote* hath  
 “ evened your Spiritts.”

Poor *Father!* he knew not how I lay awake and wept last Night, for one I shall never see agayn, nor how the Terrace Walk minded me of him. My Spiritts may seem even, and I exert myself to please; but, within, all is dark Shade, or at best, grey Twilight; and my Spiritts are, in Fact, worse here than they were at *Sheepscote*, because, here, I am continuallie thinking of one whose Name is never uttered; whereas, there, it was mentioned naturallie and tenderlie, though sadly. . . .

I will forthe to see some of the poor Folk.

Same  
Night.

Resolved to make the Circuit of the Cottages, but onlie reached the first, wherein I found poor *Nell* in  
 such

such Grief of Body and Mind, that I was avised to wait with her a long Time. Askt why she had not sent to us for Relief; was answered she had thought of doing soe, but was feared of making too free. After a lengthened Visitt, which seemed to relieve her Mind, and certaynlie relieved mine, I bade her Farewell, and at the Wicket met my Father coming up with a playn-favoured but scholarlike looking reverend Man. He sayd, "*Moll*, I could not "think what had become of you." I answered, I hoped I had not kept him waiting for Dinner—poor *Nell* had entertayned me longer than I wisht, with the Catalogue of her Troubles. The Stranger looking attentively at me, observed that may be the poor Woman had entertayned an Angel unawares; and added, "Doubt not, Madam, we woulde  
rather

1644.

“ rather await our Dinner than that  
“ you should have curtayled your  
“ Message of Charity.” Hithertoe,  
my Father had not named this  
Gentleman to me ; but now he sayd,  
“ Child, this is the Reverend Doctor  
“ *Jeremy Taylor*, Chaplain in Ordi-  
“ narie to his Majesty, and whom  
“ you know I have heard more than  
“ once preach before the King since  
“ he abode in *Oxford*.” Thereon  
I made a lowly Reverence, and we  
walked homewards together. At  
first, he discoursed chiefly with my  
Father on the Troubles of the Times,  
and then he drew me into the Dia-  
logue, in the Course of which I let  
fall a Saying of Mr. *Agnew's* which  
drew from the reverend Gentleman  
a respectfulle Look I felt I no Way  
deserved. Soe then I had to explain  
that the Saying was none of mine,  
and felt ashamed he shoulde suppose  
me

me wiser than I was, especiallie as he commended my Modesty. But we progressed well, and he soon had the Discourse all to himself, for Squire *Paice* came up, and detained *Father*, while the Doctor and I walked on. I could not help reflecting how odd it was, that I, whom Nature had endowed with such a very ordinarie Capacitie, and scarce anie Taste for Letters, shoulde continuallie be thrown into the Companie of the cleverest of Men,—first, Mr. *Milton*; then Mr. *Agnew*; and now, this Doctor *Jeremy Taylor*. But, like the other two, he is not merely clever, he is Christian and good. How much I learnt in this short Interview! for short it seemed, though it must have extended over a good half Hour. He sayd, “Per-  
“haps, young Lady, the Time may  
“come when you shall find safer  
Solace

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“ Solace in the Exercise of the  
 “ Charities than of the Affections.  
 “ Safer: for, not to consider how a  
 “ successfule or unsuccessfule Pas-  
 “ sion for a human Being of like In-  
 “ firmities with ourselves, oft stains  
 “ and darkens and shortens the Cur-  
 “ rent of Life, even the chastened  
 “ Love of a Mother for her Child,  
 “ as of *Octavia*, who swooned at ‘*Tu,*  
 “ *Marcellus, eris,*’—or of Wives for  
 “ their Husbands, as *Artemisia* and  
 “ *Laodamia*, sometimes amounting  
 “ to Idolatry—nay, the Love of  
 “ Friend for Friend, while alle  
 “ is sweet Influences and ani-  
 “ mating Transports, yet exceed-  
 “ ing the Reasonableness of that of  
 “ *David* for *Jonathan*, or of our  
 “ blessed *Lord* for *St. John* and the  
 “ Family of *Lazarus*, may procure  
 “ far more Torment than Profit:  
 “ even if the Attachment is reci-  
 procal,



“procal, and well grounded, and  
“equallie matcht, which often it  
“is not. Then interpose human  
“Tempers, and Chills, and Heates,  
“and Slyghtes fancied or intended,  
“which make the vext Soul readie  
“to wish it had never existed. How  
“smalle a Thing is a human Heart!  
“you might graspe it in your little  
“Hand; and yet its Strifes and  
“Agonies are enough to distend a  
“Skin that should cover the whole  
“World! But, in the Charities,  
“what Peace! yea, they distill Sweet-  
“nesse even from the Unthankfulle,  
“blessing him that gives more than  
“him that receives; while, in the  
“Main, they are laid out at better  
“Interest than our warmest Affec-  
“tions, and bring in a far richer  
“Harvest of Love and Gratitude.  
“Yet, let our Affections have their  
“fitting Exercise too, staying our-  
“selves

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“ selves with the Reflection, that  
 “ there is greater Happinesse, after  
 “ alle Things sayd, in loving than  
 “ in being loved, save by the *God* of  
 “ Love who first loved us, and that  
 “ they who dwell in Love dwell in  
 “ *Him.*”

Then he went on to speak of the manifold Acts and Divisions of Charity; as much, methought, in the Vein of a Poet as a Preacher; and he minded me much of that Scene in the tenth Book of the *Fairie Queene*, soe lately read to us by Mr. *Agnew*, wherein the *Red Cross Knight* and *Una* were shown *Mercy* at her Work.

Aug. 10.

A Pack-horse from *Sheepscote* just reported, laden with a goodlie Store of Books, besides fundrie smaller Tokens of *Rose's* thoughtfulle Kindnesse. I have now methodicallie  
 divided

divided my Time into stated Hours, of Prayer, Exercife, Studdy, Houfe-wiferie, and Acts of Mercy, on however a humble Scale; and find mine owne Peace of Mind thereby increafed notwithstanding the Darkneffe of publick and Dullneffe of private Affairs.

1644.

Made out the Meaning of “Cynofure” and “Cimmerian Darkneffe.” . . . .

Full fad am I to learn that Mr. *Milton* hath published another Book in Advocacy of Divorce. Alas, why will he chafe againft the Chain, and widen the cruel Divifion between us? My Father is outrageous on the Matter, and fpeaks foe paffionate of him, that it is worfe than not fpeaking of him at alle, which latelie I was avifed to complain of.

Aug. 15.

*Dick*

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Aug. 30.

*Dick* beginneth to fancie himself in Love with *Audrey Paice*—an Attachment that will doe him noe good: his Tastes alreadie want raising, and she will onlie lower them, I feare,—a comely, romping, noisie Girl, that, were she but a Farmer's Daughter, woulde be the Life and Soul of alle the Whitfunales, Harvest-homes, and Hay-makings in the Country: in short, as fond of idling and merrymaking as I once was myself: onlie I never was foe riotous.

I beginne to see Faults in *Dick* and *Harry* I never saw before. Is my Taste bettering, or my Temper worsenning? At alle Events, we have noe crosse Words, for I expect them not to alter, knowing how hard it is to doe foe by myself.

I look forward with Pleasure to my *Sheepscote* Visitt. Dear *Mother* returneth

returneth to-morrow. Good Dr. *Taylor* hath twice taken the Trouble to walk over from *Oxford* to see me, but he hath now left, and we may never meet agayn. His Visitts have beene very precious to me: I think he hath some Glimmering of my sad Case: indeed, who knows it not? At parting he sayd, smiling, he hoped he should yet hear of my making Offerings to *Viriaplaca* on *Mount Palatine*; then added, gravelie, “You know where reall  
“ Offerings may be made and alwaies  
“ accepted—Offerings of spare Half-  
“ hours and Five-minutes, when  
“ we shut the Closet Door and  
“ commune with our own Hearts  
“ and are still.” Alsoe he sayd,  
“ There are Sacrifices to make  
“ which sometimes wring our very  
“ Hearts to offer; but our gracious  
“ *God* accepts them neverthelesse,  
if

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“ if our Feet be really in the right  
 “ Path, even though, like *Chryseis*,  
 “ we look back, weeping.”

He sayd . . . . But how manie  
 Things as beautifulle and true did  
 I hear my Husband say, which  
 passed by me like the idle Wind that  
 I regarded not!

Sept. 8.

*Harry* hath just broughte in the  
 News of his Majesty's Success in the  
 West. Lord *Effex's* Army hath  
 beene completely furrounded by the  
 royal Troops; himselfe forct to escape  
 in a boat to *Plymouth*, and all the  
 Arms, Artillerie, Baggage, &c., of  
*Skippon's* Men have fallen into the  
 Hands of the King. *Father* is soe  
 pleased that he hath mounted the  
 Flag, and given double Allowance  
 of Ale to his Men.

I wearie to hear from *Robin*.

*Sheepscote,*

1644.

*Sheepscote, Oct. 10.*

How sweete a Picture of rurall Life did *Sheepscote* present, when I arrived here this Afternoon! The Water being now much out, the Face of the Countrie presented a new Aspect: there were Men threshing the Walnut Trees, Children and Women putting the Nuts into Osier Baskets, a Bailiff on a white Horse overlooking them, and now and then galloping to another Party, and splashing through the Water. Then we found Mr. *Agnew* equallie busie with his Apples, mounted half Way up one of the Trees, and throwing Cherry Pippins down into *Rose's* Apron, and now and then making as though he would pelt her: onlie she dared him, and woulde not be frightened. Her Donkey, chewing Apples in  
the

Oct. 10.

1644.

the Corner, with the Cider running out of his Mouth, presented a ludicrous Image of Enjoyment, and 'twas evidently enhanc'd by *Giles*' brushing his rough Coat with a Birch Besom, instead of minding his owne Businesse of sweeping the Walk. The Sun, shining with mellow Light on the mown Grass and fresh clipt Hornbeam Hedges, made even the commonest Objects distinct and cheerfull; and the Air was soe cleare, we could hear the Village Children afar off at their Play.

*Rose* had abundance of delicious new Honey in the Comb, and Bread hot from the Oven, for our earlie Supper. *Dick* was tempted to stay too late; however, he is oft as late, now, returning from *Audrey Paice*, though my Mother likes it not.

*Rose*



*Rose* is quite in good Spiritts now, and we goe on most harmoniouſſie and happilie. Alle our Taſtes are now in common; and I never more enjoyed this Union of Secluſion and Society. Beſides, Mr. *Agnew* is more than commonlie kind, and never ſpeaks ſternlie or ſharplie to me now. Indeed, this Morning, looking thoughtfullie at me, he ſayd, “ I know not, *Couſin*, what Change  
 “ has come over you, but you are  
 “ now alle that a wiſe Man coulde  
 “ love and approve.” I ſayd, It muſt be owing then to Dr. *Jeremy Taylor*, who had done me more goode, it woulde ſeeme, in three Leſſons, than he or Mr. *Milton* coulde imparte in thirty or three hundred. He ſayd he was inclined to attribute it to a higher Source than that; and yet, there was doubtleſſe a great Knack in teaching, and  
 there

1644.  
 Oct. 15.

1644.

there was a good deal in liking the Teacher. He had alwaies hearde the Doctor spoken of as a good, pious, and clever Man, though rather too high a Prelatist. I sayd, “There were good Men of alle  
“Sorts: there was Mr. *Milton*, who  
“woulde pull the Church down;  
“there was Mr. *Agnew*, who woulde  
“onlie have it mended; and there  
“was Dr. *Jeremy Taylor*, who was  
“content with it as it stoode.” Then *Rose* askt me of the puritanicall Preachers. Then I showed her how they preached, and made her laugh. But Mr. *Agnew* woulde not laugh. But I made him laugh at last. Then he was angrie with himself and with me; only not very angry; and sayd, I had a Right to a Name which he knew had beene given me, of “cleaving  
“Mischief.” I knew not he knew  
of

of it, and was checked, though I  
laught it off.

1644.

Oct. 16.

Walking together, this Morning,  
*Rose* was avised to say, “ Did Mr.  
“ *Milton* ever tell you the Adventures  
“ of the *Italian Lady*?” “ Rely on  
“ it he never did,” sayd Mr. *Agnew*.  
—“ *Milton* is as modest a Man as  
“ ever breathed—alle Men of first  
“ class Genius are foe.” “ What  
“ was the Adventure?” I askt, curi-  
“ ouslie. “ Why, I neede not tell  
“ you, *Moll*, that *John Milton*, as a  
“ Youth, was extremelie handsome,  
“ even beautifull. His Colour came  
“ and went foe like a Girl’s, that  
“ we of *Christ’s* College used to call  
“ him ‘ the Lady,’ and thereby annoy  
“ him noe little. One summer  
“ Afternoone he and I and young  
“ *King* (*Lycidas*, you know) had  
“ started on a country Walk, (the  
Countrie

1644.

“ Countrie is not pretty, round  
 “ *Cambridge*) when we met in with  
 “ an Acquaintance whom Mr. *Milton*  
 “ affected not, soe he sayd he would  
 “ walk on to the first rising Ground  
 “ and wait us there. On this  
 “ rising Ground stood a Tree, be-  
 “ neath which our impatient young  
 “ Gentleman presentlie cast him-  
 “ self, and, having walked fast, and  
 “ the Weather being warm, soon  
 “ falls asleep as sound as a Top.  
 “ Meantime, *King* and I quit our  
 “ Friend and faunter forward pretty  
 “ easilie. Anon comes up with us  
 “ a Caroché, with something I know  
 “ not what of outlandish in its Build;  
 “ and within it, two Ladies, one of  
 “ them having the fayrest Face I  
 “ ever set Eyes on, present Com-  
 “ panie duly excepted. The Ca-  
 “ roche having passed us, *King* and I  
 “ mutuallie expresse our Admiration,  
 and

“ and thereupon, preferring Turf  
“ to Dust, got on the other Side  
“ the Hedge, which was not soe  
“ thick but that we could make out  
“ the Caroché, and see the Ladies  
“ descend from it, to walk up the  
“ Hill. Having reached the Tree,  
“ they paused in Surprise at seeing  
“ *Milton* asleep beneath it; and in  
“ prettie dumb Shew, which we  
“ watcht sharplie, exprest their Ad-  
“ miration of his Appearance and  
“ Posture, which woulde have suited  
“ an *Arcadian* well enough. The  
“ younger Lady, hastily taking  
“ out a Pencil and Paper, wrote  
“ something which she laughingly  
“ shewed her Companion, and then  
“ put into the Sleeper's Hand.  
“ Thereupon, they got into their  
“ Caroché, and drove off. *King*  
“ and I, dying with Curiosity to  
“ know what she had writ, soon  
roufed

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“ roused our Friend and posselt  
 “ ourselves of the Secret. The  
 “ Verses ran thus. . . .

*Occhi, Stelle mortali,  
 Ministre de miei Mali,  
 Se, chiusi, m' uccidete,  
 Aperti, che farete ?*

“ *Milton* coloured, crumpled them  
 “ up, and yet put them in his  
 “ Pocket; then askt us what the  
 “ Lady was like. And herein lay  
 “ the Pleasantry of the Affair; for  
 “ I truly told him she had a Pear-  
 “ shaped Face, lustrous black Eyes,  
 “ and a Skin that shewed ‘ *il bruno*  
 “ *il bel non toglie* ;’ whereas, *King*,  
 “ in his Mischief, drew a fancy  
 “ Portrait, much liker you, *Moll*,  
 “ than the *Incognita*, which hit  
 “ *Milton’s* Taste soe much better,  
 “ that he was believed for his Payns;  
 “ and then he declared that I had  
 beene

“ beene describing the Duenna! . . .  
“ Some Time after, when *Milton*  
“ beganne to talk of visiting *Italy*,  
“ we bantered him, and sayd he was  
“ going to look for the Incognita.  
“ He stoode itwell, and sayd, ‘Laugh  
“ on! do you think I mind you?  
“ Not a Bit.’ I think he did.”

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Just at this Turn, Mr. *Agnew* stumbled at something in the long Grass. It proved to be an old, rustie Horfe-pistol. His Countenance changed at once from gay to grave. “ I thought we had noe such Things hereabouts yet,” cried he, viewing it askance.—“ I suppose I mighte as well think I had found a Corner of the Land where there was noe originall Sin.” And soe, flung it over the Hedge.

——First class Geniuses are alwaies modest, are they?—Then I should say that young *Italian* Lady’s

1644.

Lady's Genius was not of the first Clafs.

Oct. 19.

Speaking, to-day, of Mr. *Waller*, whom I had once feen at Uncle *John's*, Mr. *Agnew* fayd he had obtayned the Reputation of being one of our fmootherft Verfers, and thereupon brought forth one or two of his fmall pieces in Manuscript, which he read to *Rofe* and me. They were addrest to the Lady *Dorothy Sydney*; and certainlie for specious Flatterie I doe not fuppofe they can be matcht; but there is noe Imprefs of reall Feeling in them. How diverfe from my Husband's Verfing! He never writ anie mere Love-verses, indeede, foe far as I know; but how much truer a Sence he hath of what is reallie beautifulle and becoming in a Woman than Mr. *Waller*! The Lady *Alice Egerton*



*Egerton* mighte have beene more justlie proud of the fine Things written *for* her in *Comus*, than the Lady *Dorothea* of anie of the fine Things written *of* her by this courtier-like Poet. For, to say that Trees bend down in homage to a Woman when she walks under them, and that the healing Waters of *Tonbridge* were placed there by Nature to compensate for the fatal Pride of *Sacharissa*, is soe fullesome and untrue as noe Woman, not devoured by Conceite, coulde endure; whereas, the Check that Villanie is sensible of in the Prefence of Virtue, is most nobly, not extravagantlie, exprest by *Comus*. And though my Husband be almost too lavish, even in his short Pieces, of classic Allusion and Personation, yet, like antique Statues and Busts well placed in some statelie Pleasaunce, they are alwaies appropriate

1644.

1644.

priate and gracefulle, which is more than can be fayd of Mr. *Waller's* overstrayned Figures and Metaphors.

Oct. 20.

News from Home: alle well. *Audrey Paice* on a Vifitt there. I hope *Mother* hath not put her into my Chamber, but I know that she hath sett so manie Trays full of Spearmint, Peppermint, Camomiles, and Poppie-heads in the blue Chamber to dry, that she will not care to move them, nor have the Window opened lest they shoulde be blown aboute. I wish I had turned the Key on my ebony Cabinet.

Oct. 24.

*Richard* and *Audrey* rode over here, and spent a noisie Afternoone. *Rose* had the Goose dressed which I know she meant to have reserved for tomorrow. *Clover* was in a Heat, which one would have thoughte he needed

needed not to have beene, with carrying a Lady; but *Audrey* is heavie. She treats *Dick* like a Boy; and, indeede he is not much more; but he is quite taken up with her. I find she lies in the blue Chamber, which she says smells rarelie of Herbs. They returned not till late, after sundrie Hints from Mr. *Agnew*.

1644.

Alas, alas, *Robin's* Silence is too sorrowfullie explained! He hath beene sent Home soe ill that he is like to die. This Report I have from *Diggory*, just come over to fetch me, with whom I start, soe soone as his Horse is bated. *Lord*, have Mercie on *Robin*.

Oct. 27.

The Children are alle sent away to keep the House quiete.

*At Robin's Bedside.*

Oh, woefulle Sight! I had not  
known

Saturday  
Night.

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known that pale Face, had I met it unawares. So thin and wan,—and he hath shot up into a tall Stripling during the last few Months. These two Nights of Watching have tried me forelie, but I would not be withholden from sitting up with him yet agayn—what and if this Night should be his last? how coulde I forgive myself for sleeping on now and taking my Rest? The first Night, he knew me not; yet it was bitter-sweet to hear him chiding at sweet *Moll* for not coming. Yesternight he knew me for a While, kissed me, and fell into an heavie Sleepe, with his Hand locked in mine. We hoped the Crifis was come; but 'twas not foe. He raved much of a Man alle in red, riding hard after him. I minded me of those Words, “the Enemy sayd, I will overtake, “I will pursue,”—and, noe one being  
by,

by, save the unconscious Sufferer, I kneeled down beside him, and most earnestlie prayed for his Deliverance from all spirituall Adversaries. When I lookt up, his Eyes, larger and darker than ever, were fixt on me with a strange, wistfulle Stare, but he spake not. From that Moment he was quiete.

The Doctor thought him rambling this Morning, though I knew he was not, when he spake of an Angel in a long white Garment watching over him and kneeling by him in the Night.

Poor *Nell* fitteth up with *Mother* to-night—right thankfulle is she to find that she can be of anie use: she says it seems soe strange that she should be able to make any Return for my Kindnesse. I must sleep to-night, that I may watch to-morrow.

The

1644.

Sunday  
Evening.

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The Servants are nigh spent, and are besides foolishlie afrayd of Infection. I hope *Rose* prays for me. Soe drowfie and dulle am I, as scarce to be able to pray for myself.

Monday.

*Rose* and Mr. *Agnew* come to abide with us for some Days. How thankfulle am I! Tears have relieved me.

*Robin* worse to-day. *Father* quite subdued. Mr. *Agnew* will sit up to-night, and insists on my sleeping.

*Crab* howled under my Window Yesternight as he did before my Wedding. I hope there is nothing in it. *Harry* got up and beat him, and at last put him in the Stable.

Tuesday.

After two Nights' Rest, I feel quite strengthened and restored this Morning. Deare *Rose* read me to sleep in her low, gentle Voice, and then lay down by my Side, twice stepping

stepping into *Robin's* Chamber during the Night, and bringing me News that all was well. Relieved in Mind, I slept heavilie nor woke till late. Then, returned to the sick Chamber, and found *Rose* bathing dear *Robin's* Temples with Vinegar, and changing his Pillow—his thin Hand rested on Mr. *Agnew*, on whom he lookt with a composed, collected Gaze. Slowlie turned his Eyes on me, and faintlie smiled, but spake not.

Poor dear *Mother* is ailing now. I fate with her and *Father* some Time; but it was a true Relief when *Rose* took my Place and let me return to the sick Room. *Rose* hath alreadie made severall little Changes for the better; improved the Ventilation of *Robin's* Chamber, and prevented his hearing foe manie Noises. Alsoe, showed me how to make a pleasant cooling

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cooling Drink, which he likes better than the warm Liquids, and which she assures me he may take with perfect Safetie.

Same  
Evening.

*Robin* vext, even to Tears, because the Doctor forbids the use of his cooling Drink, though it hath certainlie abated the Fever. At his Wish I stept down to intercede with the Doctor, then closetted with my Father, to discourse, as I suppose, of *Robin's* Symptons. Insteade of which, found them earnestlie engaged on the never-ending Topick of Cavaliers and Roundheads. I was chafed and cut to the Heart, yet what can poor *Father* do; he is useles in the Sick-room, he is wearie of Suspense, and 'tis well if publick Affairs can divert him for an odd Half-hour.

The Doctor would not hear of  
*Robin*



*Robin* taking the cooling Beverage, and warned me that his Death would be upon my Head if I permitted him to be chilled: soe what could I doe? Poor *Robin* very impatient in consequence; and raving towards Midnight. *Rose* insisted in taking the last Half of my Watch.

1644.

I know not that I was ever more forelie exercised than during the first Half of this Night. *Robin*, in his crazie Fit, would leave his Bed, and was soe strong as nearlie to master *Nell* and me, and I feared I must have called *Richard*. The next Minute he fell back as weak as a Child: we covered him up warm, and he was overtaken either with Stupor or Sleep. Earnestlie did I pray it might be the latter, and conduce to his healing. Afterwards, there being writing Implements at Hand, I wrote a Letter  
to

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to Mr. *Milton*, which, though the Fancy of sending it soon died away, yet eased my Mind. When not in Prayer, I often find myself silently talking to him.

Wednesday.

Waking late after my scant Night's Rest, I found my Breakfast neatlie layd out in the little Antechamber, to prevent the Fatigue of going down Stairs. A Handfulle of Autumn Flowers beside my Plate, left me in noe Doubt it was *Rose's* doing; and Mr. *Agnew* writing at the Window, told me he had persuaded my Father to goe to *Shotover* with *Dick*. Then laying aside his Pen, stept into the Sick-chamber for the latest News, which was good: and, sitting next me, talked of the Progress of *Robin's* Illness in a grave yet hopefulle Manner; leading, as he chieflie does, to high  
and

and unearthlie Sources of Consolation. He advised me to take a Turn in the fresh Ayr, though but as far as the two Junipers, before I entered *Robin's* Chamber, which, somewhat reluctiantlie, I did; but the bright Daylight and warm Sun had no good Effect on my Spiritts: on the Contrarie, nothing in blythe Nature seeming in unison with my Sadnesse, Tears flowed without relieving me.

——What a solemne, pompous Prigge is this Doctor! He cries “humph!” and “aye!” and bites his Nails and screws his Lips together, but I don't believe he understands soe much of Physick, after alle, as Mr. *Agnew*.

*Father* came Home fulle of the Rebels' Doings, but as for me, I shoulde hear them thundering at our Gate with Apathie, except insofar as I feared them distreffiing *Robin*.

*Audrey*

1644.

*Audrey* rode over with her Father, this Morn, to make Enquiries. She might have come sooner had she meant to be anie reall Use to a Family she has thought of entering. Had *Rose* come to our Help as late in the Day, we had been poorlie off.

Thursday.

May *Heaven* in its Mercy save us from the evil Consequence of this new Mischance!—*Richard*, jealous at being allowed so little Share in nursing *Robin*, whom he sayd he loved as well as anie did, would fit up with him last Night, along with *Mother*. Twice I heard him snoring, and stept in to prevail on him to change Places, but coulde not get him to stir. A third Time he fell asleep, and, it seems, *Mother* slept too; and *Robin*, in his Fever, got out of Bed and drank near a Quart  
of

of colde Water, waking *Dick* by setting down the Pitcher. Of course the Bustle soon reached my listening Ears. *Dick*, to do him Justice, was frightened enough, and stole away to his Bed without a Word of Defence; but poor *Mother*, who had been equallie off her Watch, made more Noise about it than was good for *Robin*; who, neverthelesse, we having warmlie covered up, burst into a profuse Heat, and fell into a sound Sleep, which hath now holden him manie Hours. Mr. *Agnew* augureth favourablie of his waking, but we await it in prayerfulle Anxietie.

—The Crisis is past! and the Doctor sayeth he alle along expected it last Night, which I cannot believe, but *Father* and *Mother* doe. At alle Events, praised be *Heaven*, there is now hope that deare *Robin* may recover.

1644.

recover. *Rose* and I have mingled Tears, Smiles, and Thanksgivings; Mr. *Agnew* hath expressed Gratitude after a more collected Manner, and endeavoured to check the somewhat ill-governed Expression of Joy throughout the House; warning the Servants, but especiallie *Dick* and *Harry*, that *Robin* may yet have a Relapse.

With what Transport have I sat beside dear *Robin's* Bed, returning his fixed, earnest, thankfull Gaze, and answering the feeble Pressure of his Hand!—Going into the Study just now, I found *Father* crying like a Child—the first Time I have known him give Way to Tears during *Robin's* Illness. Mr. *Agnew* presentlie came in, and composed him better than I could.

Saturday.

*Robin* better, though still very weak.

weak. Had his Bed made, and took a few Spoonfuls of Broth.

1644.

A very different Sabbath from the last. Though *Robin's* Constitution hath received a Shock it may never recover, his comparative Amendment fills us with Thankfulness; and our chastened Suspense hath a sweet Solemnitie and Trustfullness in it, which pass Understanding.

Sunday.

Mr. *Agnew* conducted our Devotions. This Morning, I found him praying with *Robin*—I question if it were for the first Time. *Robin* looking on him with Eyes of such sedate Affection!

*Robin* still progressing. Dear *Rose* and Mr. *Agnew* leave us tomorrow, but they will soon come agayn. Oh faithful Friends!

Thursday.

\* \* \* \* \*

Can

1646.  
April.

Can Anie thing equall the desperate Ingratitude of the human Heart? Testifie of it, Journall, agaynst me. Here did I, throughout the incessant Cares and Anxieties of *Robin's* Sicknesse, find, or make Time, for almoste dailie Record of my Trouble; since which, whole Months have passed without soe much as a scrawled Ejaculation of Thankfullnesse that the Sick hath beene made whole.

Yet, not that that Thankfullnesse hath beene unfelt, nor, though unwritten, unexpressed. Nay, O *Lord*, deeplie, deeplie have I thanked thee for thy tender Mercies. And he healed soe slowlie, that Suspense, as 'twere wore itself out, and gave Place to a dull, mournful Persuasion that an *Hydropsia* would waste him away, though more slowlie, yet noe less surelie than the *Fever*.

Soe



Soe Weeks lengthened into Months, I mighte well say Years, they seemed soe long! and stille he seemed to neede more Care and Tenderneffe; till, just as he and I had learnt to say, "Thy Will, O *Lord*, be done," he began to gain Flesh, his craving Appetite moderated, yet his Food nourished him, and by *God's* Blessing he recovered!

During that heavie Season of Probation, our Hearts were unlocked, and we spake oft to one another of Things in Heaven and Things in Earth. Afterwards, our mutuall Reserves returned, and *Robin*, methinks, became shyer than before, but there can never cease to be a dearer Bond between us. Now we are apart, I aim to keep him mindfulle of the high and holie Resolutions he formed in his Sickneffe; and though he never answers these

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these Portions of my Letters, I am avised to think he finds them not displeasing.

Now that *Oxford* is like to be besieged, my Life is more confined than ever; yet I cannot, and will not leave *Father* and *Mother*, even for the *Agnews*, while they are soe much harassed. This Morning, my Father hath received a Letter from Sir *Thomas Glemham*, requiring a larger Quantitie of winnowed Wheat, than, with alle his Loyaltie, he likes to send.

April 23.

*Ralph Hewlett* hath just looked in to say, his Father and Mother have in Safetie reached *London*, where he will shortlie joyn them, and to ask, is there anie Service he can doe me? Ay, truly; one that I dare not name—he can bring me Word of Mr. *Milton*, of his Health,  
of

of his Looks, of his Speech, and whether . . . . .

1646.

*Ralph* shall be noe Messenger of mine.

Talking of Money Matters this Morning, *Mother* sayd Something that brought Tears into mine Eyes. She observed, that though my Husband had never beene a Favourite of hers, there was one Thing wherein she must say he had behaved generously: he had never, to this Day, askt *Father* for the 500*l.* which had brought him, in the first Instance, to *Forest Hill*, (he having promised old Mr. *Milton* to try to get the Debt paid,) and the which, on his asking for my Hand, *Father* tolde him shoulde be made over sooner or later, in lieu of Dower.

April 24.

Did *Rose* know the Bitter-sweet she was imparting to me, when she  
gave

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gave me, by stealth as 'twere, the latelie publiſht Volume of my Huſband's *English Verſing*? It hath beene my Companion ever ſince; for I had peruſed the *Comus* but by Snatches, under the Diſadvantage of crabbed Manuſcript. This Morning, to uſe his owne deare Words:—

*I ſat me down to watch, upon a Bank,  
With Ivy canopied, and interwove  
With flaunting Honeysuckle, and beganne,  
Wrapt in a pleaſing Fit of Melancholie,  
To meditate.*

The Text of my Meditation was this, drawne from the ſame loved Source:—

*This I hold firm;  
Virtue may be aſſayled, but never hurt,  
Surprised by unjuſt Force, but not enthralled;*

*Yea,*

*Yea, even that which Mischief meant  
most Harm,  
Shall, in the happy Trial, prove most  
Glory.*

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But who hath such Virtue? have I? hath he? No, we have both gone astray, and done amiss, and wrought sinfullie; but I worst, I first, therefore more neede that I humble myself, and pray for both.

There is one, more unhappie, perhaps, than either. The *King*, most misfortunate Gentleman! who knoweth not which Way to turn, nor whom to trust. Last Time I saw him, methought never was there a Face soe full of Woe.

The *King* hath escaped! He gave Orders overnight at alle the Gates, for three Persons to passe; and, accompanied onlie by Mr. *Ashburnham*

May 6.

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*burnham*, and Mr. *Hurd*, rode forthe at Nightfalle, towards *London*. Sure, he will not throw himselfe into the Hands of Parliament ?

*Mother* is affrighted beyond Measure at the near Neighbourhood of *Fairfax's* Army, and entreats *Father* to leave alle behind, and flee with us into the City. It may yet be done ; and we alle share her Feares.

Saturday  
Even.

Packing up in greate haste, after a confused Family Council, wherein some fresh Accounts of the Rebels' Advances, broughte in by *Diggory*, made my Father the sooner consent to a stolen Flight into *Oxford*, *Diggory* being left behind in Charge. Time of Flight, To-morrow after Dark, the *Puritans* being busie at their Sermons. The better the Day, the better the Deede.—*Heaven* make it soe !

*Oxford* ;

*Oxford*; in most confined and unpleasent Lodgings; but noe Matter, manie better and richer than ourselves fare worfe, and our King hath not where to lay his Head. 'Tis sayd he hath turned his Course towards *Scotland*. There are Souldiers in this House, whose Noise distracts us. Alsoe, a poor Widow Lady, whose Husband hath beene slayn in these Wars. The Children have taken a feverish Complaynt, and require incessant tending. Their Beds are far from cleane, in too little Space, and ill aired.

The Widow Lady goes about visiting the Sick, and would faine have my Companie. The Streets have displeas'd me, being soe full of Men; however, in a close Hoode I have accompanied her fundrie Times. 'Tis a good Soul, and full

1646.  
Tuesday.

May 20.

1646.

full of pious Works and Alms-deedes.

May 27.

*Diggory* hath found his Way to us, alle dismaied, and bringing *Difmay* with him, for the Rebels have taken and ranfacked our House, and turned him forthe. “A Plague on “these Wars!” as *Father* says. What are we to doe, or how live, despoyled of alle? *Father* hath lost, one Way and another, since the Civil War broke out, three thousand Pounds, and is now nearlie beggared. *Mother* weeps bitterlie, and *Father’s* Countenance hath fallen more than ever I saw it before. “Nine Children!” he exclaimed, just now; “and onlie “one provided for!” His Eye fell upon me for a Moment, with less Tenderneffe than usuall, as though he wished me in *Aldersgate Street*.  
I’m



I'm sure I wish I were there,—  
not because *Father* is in Misfortune ;  
oh, no.

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The Parliament requireth our un-  
fortunate King to issue Orders to  
this and alle his other Garrisons,  
commanding theire Surrender ; and  
*Father*, finding this is likelie to take  
Place forthwith, is bufied in having  
himself comprised within the Articles  
of Surrender. 'Twill be hard in-  
deede, shoulde this be denied. His  
Estate lying in the King's Quarters,  
how coulde he doe les than adhere  
to his Majesty's Partie during this  
unnaturall War? I am sure *Mother*  
grudged the Royalists everie Goose  
and Turkey they had from our Yard.

June.

Praised be *Heaven*, deare *Father*  
hath just received Sir *Thomas Fair-*  
*fax's* Protection, empowering him  
quietlie

June 27.

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quietlie and without let to goe  
 forthe “with Servants, Horses,  
 “Arms, Goods, etc.” to “*London*  
 “or elfewhere,” whitherfoever he  
 will. And though the Protection  
 extends but over fix Months, at the  
 Expiry of which Time, *Father* must  
 take Measures to embark for some  
 Place of Refuge beyond Seas, yet  
 who knows what may turn up in  
 those fix Months! The King may  
 enjoy his Owne agayn. Meantime,  
 we immediatelie leave *Oxford*.

*Forest Hill.*

At Home agayn; and what a  
 Home! Everiething to seeke, everie-  
 thing misplaced, broken, abused, or  
 gone altogether! The Gate off its  
 Hinges; the Stone Balls of the  
 Pillars overthrowne, the great Bell  
 stolen, the clipt Junipers grubbed  
 up, the Sun-diall broken! Not a  
 Hen

Hen or Chicken, Duck or Duckling, left! *Crab* half-starved, and soe glad to see us, that he dragged his Kennel after him. *Daisy* and *Blanch* making such piteous Moans at the Paddock Gate, that I coulde not bear it, but helped *Lettice* to milk them. Within Doors, everie Room smelling of Beer and Tobacco; Cupboards broken open, etc. On my Chamber Floor, a greasy steeple-crowned Hat! Threw it forthe from the Window with a Pair of Tongs.

*Mother* goes about the House weeping. *Father* sits in his broken Arm-chair, the Picture of Disconsolateness. I see the *Agnews*, true Friends! riding hither; and with them a Third, who, methinks, is *Rose's* Brother *Ralph*.

*London. St. Martin's le Grand.*

Trembling, weeping, hopefulle,  
dismaied,

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dismaied, here I sit in mine Uncle's hired House, alone in a Crowd, scared at mine owne Precipitation, readie to wish myselfe back, unable to resolve, to reflect, to pray. . . .

Twelve at  
Night.

Alle is silent; even in the laticke busie Streets. Why art thou cast down, my Heart? why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou stille in the *Lord*, for he is the Joy and Light of thy Countenance. Thou hast beene long of learning him to be such. Oh, forget not thy Lesson now! Thy best Friend hath functioned, nay, counselled this Step, and overcome alle Obstacles, and provided the Means of this Journey; and to-morrow at Noone, if Events prove not crosse, I shall have Speech of him whom my Soul loveth. To-night, let me watch, fast, and pray.

How

How awfuller it is to beholde a  
Man weepe! mine owne Tears, when  
I think thereon, well forthe . . . . .

*Rose* was a true Friend when she  
sayd “our prompt Affections are oft  
“our wise Counsellors.” Soe, she  
suggested and advised alle; wrung  
forthe my Father’s Consent, and sett  
me on my Way, even putting Money  
in my Purse. Well for me, had  
she beene at my Journey’s End as  
well as its Beginning.

’Stead of which, here was onlie  
mine Aunt; a slow, timid, uncertayn  
Soule, who proved but a broken  
Reed to lean upon.

Soe, alle I woulde have done  
arighte went crosse, the Letter  
never delivered, the Message delayed  
till he had left Home, soe that me-  
thought I shoulde goe crazie.

While the Boy, stammering in  
his lame Excuses, bore my chafed  
Reproaches

1646.

Friday; at  
Night.

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Reproaches the more humblie be-  
cause he saw he had done me some  
grievous Hurt, though he knew  
not what, a Voice in the adjacent  
Chamber in Alternation with mine  
Uncle's, drove the Blood of a Suddain  
from mine Heart, and then sent it  
back with impetuous Rush, for I  
knew the Accents right well.

Enters mine Aunt, alle flurried,  
and hushing her Voice. " Oh,  
" *Niece*, he whom you wot of is  
" here, but knoweth not you are at  
" Hand, nor in *London*. Shall I tell  
" him?"

But I gasped, and held her back  
by her Skirts; then, with a suddain  
secret Prayer, or Cry, or maybe,  
Wish, as 'twere, darted up unto  
Heaven for Assistance, I took noe  
Thought what I shoulde speak when  
confronted with him, but opening  
the Door between us, he then  
standing

standing with his Back towards it, rushed forth and to his Feet—there sank, in a Gush of Tears; for not one Word coulde I proffer, nor soe much as look up.

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A quick Hand was laid on my Head, on my Shoulder—as quicklie removed. . . . and I was aware of the Door being hurriedlie opened and shut, and a Man hasting forthe; but 'twas onlie mine Uncle. Meantime, my Husband, who had at first uttered a suddain Cry or Exclamation, had now left me, sunk on the Ground as I was, and retired a Space, I know not whither, but methinks he walked hastilie to and fro. Thus I remained, agonized in Tears, unable to recal one Word of the humble Appeal I had pondered on my Journey, or to have spoken it, though I had known everie Syllable by Rote; yet not wishing myself, even in that  
Suspense,

1646.

Suspense, Shame, and Anguish, elsewhere than where I was cast, at mine Husband's Feet.

Or ever I was aware, he had come up, and caught me to his Breast: then, holding me back soe as to look me in the Face, sayd, in Accents I shall never forget,

“ Much I coulde say to reproach,  
 “ but will not! Henceforth, let us  
 “ onlie recall this darke Passage  
 “ of our deeplie sinfull Lives, to  
 “ quicken us to *God's* Mercy in  
 “ affording us this Re-union. Let  
 “ it deepen our Penitence, enhance  
 “ our Gratitude.”

Then, suddainlie covering up his Face with his Hands, he gave two or three Sobs; and for some few Minutes coulde not refrayn himself; but, when at length he uncovered his Eyes and looked down on me with Goodness and Sweetnesse, 'twas like  
 like



like the Sun's cleare shining after  
Raine. . . . .

1646.

Shall I now destroy the disgracefulle Records of this blotted Book? I think not; for 'twill quicken me perhaps, as my Husband sayth, to "deeper Penitence and stronger Gratitude," shoulde I henceforthe be in Danger of settling on the Lees, and forgetting the deepe Waters which had nearlie closed over mine Head: At present, I am soe joyfulle, soe light of Heart under the Sense of Forgiveneffe, that it seemeth as though Sorrow coulde lay hold of me noe more; and yet we are still, as 'twere, disunited for awhile; for my Husband is agayn shifting House, and preparing to move his increased Establishment into *Barbican*, where he hath taken a goodly Mansion; and, until it is ready, I am to abide  
here.

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here. I might pleasantlie cavill at this; but, in Truth, will cavill at Nothing now.

I am, by this, full perswaded that *Ralph's* Tale concerning Miss *Davies* was a false Lie; though, at the Time, supposing it to have some Colour, it inflamed my Jealousie noe little. The cross Spight of that Youth led, under his Sister's Management, to an Issue his Malice never forecast; and now, though I might come at the Truth for Inquiry, I will not soe much as even foil my Mind with thinking of it agayn; for there is that Truth in mine Husband's Eyes, which woulde silence the Slanders of a hundred Liars. Chafed, irritated, he has beene, soe as to excite the sarcastic Constructions of those who wish him evill; but his Soul, and his Heart, and his Mind require a Flighte beyond  
beyond

beyond *Ralph's* Witt to comprehend; and I know and feel that they are *mine*.

He hath just led in the two *Philips's* to me, and left us together. *Jack* lookt at me askance, and held aloof; but deare little *Ned* threw his Arms about me and wept, and I did weep too; seeing the which, *Jack* advanced, gave me his Hand, and finally his Lips, then lookt as much as to say, "Now, *Alle's* right." They are grown, and are more comely than heretofore, which, in some Measure, is owing to their Hair being noe longer cut strait and short after the Puritanicall Fashion I soe hate, but curled like their Uncle's.

I have writ, not the Particulars, but the Issue of my Journey, unto *Rose*, whose loving Heart, I know, yearns for Tidings. Alsoe, more  
brieflie

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brieflie unto my Mother, who loveth not Mr. *Milton*.

*Barbican.*

September.

In the Night-season, we take noe Rest; we search out our Hearts, and commune with our Spiritts, and checque our Souls' Accounts, before we dare court our Sleep; but in the Day of Happineffe we cut shorte our Reckonings; and here am I, a joyfulle Wife, too proud and busie amid my dailie Cares to have Leifure for more than a brief Note in my *Diarium*, as *Ned* woulde call it. 'Tis a large House, with more Rooms than we can fill, even with the *Philips's* and their Scholar-mates, olde Mr. *Milton*, and my Husband's Books to boot. I feel Pleasure in being housewifelie; and reape the Benefit of alle that I learnt of this Sorte at *Sheepscote*. Mine Husband's  
Eyes

Eyes follow me with Delight; and once with a perplexed yet pleased Smile, he sayd to me, “ Sweet Wife, “ thou art strangelic altered; it “ seems as though I have indeede “ lost ‘ sweet *Moll*’ after Alle!”

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Yes, I am indeed changed; more than he knows or could believe. And he is changed too. With Payn I perceive a more stern, severe Tone occasionallie used by him; doubtlesse the Cloke assumed by his Griefe to hide the Ruin I had made within. Yet a more geniall Influence is fast melting this away. Agayn, I note with Payn that he complayns much of his Eyes. At first, I observed he rubbed them oft, and dared not mention it, believing that his Tears on Account of me, sinfull Soule! had made them smart. Soe, perhaps, they did in the first Instance, for it appears they have beene ailing ever since

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since the Year I left him; and Overstuddy, which my Presence mighte have prevented, hath conduced to the same ill Effect. Whenever he now looks at a lighted Candle, he sees a Sort of Iris alle about it; and, this Morning, he disturbed me by mentioning that a total Darknesse obscured everie Thing on the left Side of his Eye, and that he even feared, sometimes, he might eventuellie lose the Sight of both. “ In “ which Case,” he cheerfully sayd, “ you, deare Wife, must become “ my Lecturer as well as Amanu- “ ensis, and content yourself to read “ to me a World of crabbed Books, “ in Tongues that are not nor neede “ ever be yours, seeing that a Woman “ has ever Enough of her own!”

Then, more pensivelie, he added, “ I discipline and tranquillize my “ Mind on this Subject, ever remembering,

“ membering, when the Appre-  
“ hension afflicts me, that, as Man  
“ lives not by Bread alone, but by  
“ everie Word that proceeds out of  
“ the Mouth of *God*, so Man like-  
“ wise lives not by *Sight* alone, but  
“ by Faith in the Giver of Sight.  
“ As long, therefore, as it shall  
“ please Him to prolong, however  
“ imperfectlie, this precious Gift,  
“ soe long will I lay up Store  
“ agaynst the Days of Darknesse,  
“ which may be many; and when-  
“ soever it shall please Him to  
“ withdrawe it from me altogether,  
“ I will cheerfully bid mine Eyes  
“ keep Holiday, and place my Hand  
“ trustfullie in His, to be led whi-  
“ thersoever He will, through the  
“ Remainder of Life.”

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A Honeymoon cannot for ever  
last; nor Sense of Danger, when  
it

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it long hath past;—but one little Difference from out manie greater Differences between my late happie Fortnighte in *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, and my present dailie Course in *Barbican*, hath marked the Distinction between Lover and Husband. There it was “sweet *Moll*,” “my Heart's Life of Life,” “my dearest cleaving Mischief;” here 'tis onlie “Wife,” “Mistress *Milton*,” or at most “deare or sweet “Wife.” This, I know, is masterfulle and seemly.

Onlie, this Morning, chancing to quote one of his owne Lines,

*These Things may startle well, but  
not astounde,—*

he sayd, in a Kind of Wonder, “Why, *Moll*, whence had you “that? — Methought you hated “Verfing, as you used to call it.  
When



“When learnt you to love it?” I hung my Head in my old foolish Way, and answered, “Since I learnt “to love the Verfer.” “Why, this “is the best of Alle!” he hastily cried, “Can my sweet Wife be indeede Heart of my Heart and “Spirit of my Spirit? I lost, or “drove away a Child, and have “found a Woman.” Thereafter, he less often wifed me, and I found I was agayn sweet *Moll*.

This Afternoon, *Christopher Milton* lookt in on us. After saluting me with the usuall Mixture of Malice and Civilitie in his Looks, he fell into easie Conversation; and presentlie says to his Brother quietlie enough, “I saw a curious Penny-worth at a Book-stall as I came “along this Morning.” “What “was that?” says my Husband, brightening up. “It had a long Name,

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“Name,” says *Christopher*, — “I think it was called *Tetrachordon*.” My Husband cast at me a suddain, quick Look, but I did not see much as change Colour; and quietlie continued my Sewing.

“I wonder,” says he, after a Pause, “that you did not invest a small Portion of your Capitall in the Work, as you say ’twas see greate a Bargain. However, Mr. *Kit*, let me give you one small Hint with alle the goode Humour imaginable; don’t take Advantage of our neare and deare Relation to make too frequent Opportunities of saying to me Anything that would certainlie procure for another Man a Thrashing!”

Then, after a short Silence betweene Alle, he suddainlie burst out laughing, and cried, “I know ’tis on the Stalls; I’ve seene it, *Kit*, myself!”

“ myself! Oh, had you seene, as  
“ I did, the Blockheads poring over  
“ the Title, and hammering at it  
“ while you might have walked to  
“ *Mile End* and back!”

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“ That’s Fame, I suppose,” says  
*Christopher* drylie; and then goes  
off to talk of some new Exercise of  
the Prefs-licenser’s Authoritie, which  
he seemed to approve, but it kindled  
my Husband in a Minute.

“ What Folly! what Nonsense!”  
cried he, smiting the Table; “ these  
“ *Jacks* in Office sometimes devise  
“ such senselesse Things that I really  
“ am ashamed of being of their  
“ Party. Licence, indeed! their  
“ Licence! I suppose they will  
“ shortly license the Lengthe of  
“ *Moll’s* Curls, and regulate the  
“ Colour of her Hoode, and forbid  
“ the Larks to sing within Sounde of  
“ *Bow Bell*, and the Bees to hum  
o’

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“ o’ *Sundays*. Methoughte I had  
 “ broken *Mabbot’s* Teeth two Years  
 “ agone ; but I must bring forthe a  
 “ new Edition of my *Areopagitica* ;  
 “ and I’ll put your Name down, *Kit*,  
 “ for a hundred Copies ! ”

October.

Though a rusticall Life hath ever had my Suffrages, Nothing can be more pleasant than our regular Course. We rise at five or sooner : while my Husband combs his Hair, he commonly hums or sings some Psalm or Hymn, versing it, maybe, as he goes on. Being drest, *Ned* reads him a Chapter in the *Hebrew* Bible. With *Ned* stille at his Knee, and me by his Side, he expounds and improves the Same ; then, after a shorte, heartie Prayer, releases us both. Before I have finished my Dressing, I hear him below at his Organ, with the two Lads, who  
 sing

sing as well as Choristers, hymning Anthems and *Gregorian* Chants, now soaring up to the Clouds, as 'twere, and then dying off as though some wide echoing Space lay betweene us. I usuallie find Time to tie on my Hoode and slip away to the Herb-market for a Bunch of fresh Radishes or Cresses, a Sprig of Parsley, or at the leaste a Pofy, to lay on his Plate. A good wheaten Loaf, fresh Butter and Eggs, and a large Jug of Milk, compose our simple Breakfast; for he likes not, as my Father, to see Boys hacking a huge Piece of Beef, nor cares for heavie feeding, himself. Onlie, olde Mr. *Milton* sometimes takes a Rasher of toasted Bacon, but commonly, a Basin of Furmity, which I prepare more to his Minde than the Servants can.

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After Breakfast, I well know the  
Boys'

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Boys' Lessons will last till Noone. I therefore goe to my Clofett Duties after my *Forest Hill* Fashion; thence to Market, buy what I neede, come Home, look to my Maids, give forthe needfulle Stores, then to my Needle, my Books, or perchance to my Lute, which I woulde faine play better. From twelve to one is the Boys' Hour of Pastime; and it may generallie be sayd, my Husband's and mine too. He draws aside the green Curtain,—for we sit mostly in a large Chamber shaped like the Letter T, and thus divided while at our separate Duties: my End is the pleafantest, has the Sun most upon it, and hath a Balcony overlooking a Garden. At one, we dine; always on simple, plain Dishes, but drest with Neatnesse and Care. Olde Mr. *Milton* sits at my right Hand and says Grace; and, though grow-  
ing

ing a little deaf, enters into alle the livelie Discourse at Table. He loves me to help him to the tenderest, by Reason of his Loffe of Teeth. My Husband careth not to sitt over the Wine; and hath noe sooner finished the Cheefe and Pippins than he reverts to the Viol or Organ, and not onlie sings himself, but will make me sing too, though he sayth my Voice is better than my Ear. Never was there such a tunefulle Spirit. He alwaies tears himself away at laste, as with a Kind of Violence, and returns to his Books at six o' the Clock. Meantime, his old Father dozes, and I sew at his Side.

From six to eight, we are seldom without Friends, chance Visitants, often scholarlike and witty, who tell us alle the News, and remain to partake a light Supper. The Boys enjoy this Season as much as I doe,  
though

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though with Books before them, their Hands over their Ears, pretending to con the Morrow's Tasks. If the Guests chance to be musicall, the Lute and Viol are broughte forthe, to alternate with Roundelay and Madrigal: the old Man beating Time with his feeble Fingers, and now and then joining with his quavering Voice. (By the way, he hath not forgotten to this Hour, my imputed Crime of losing that Song by *Harry Lawes*: my Husband takes my Part, and sayth it will turn up some Day when leaste expected, like *Justinian's Pandects*.) *Hubert* brings him his Pipe and a Glafs of Water, and then I crave his Blessing and goe to Bed; first, praying ferventlie for alle beneathe this deare Roof, and then for alle at *Sheepscote* and *Forest Hill*.

On Sabbaths, besides the publick Ordinances



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Ordinances of Devotion, which I cannot, with alle my striving, bring myself to love like the Services to which I have beene accustomed, we have much Reading, Singing, and Discourfing among ourfelves. The Maids fing, the Boys fing, *Hubert* fings, olde Mr. *Milton* fings; and trulie with foe much of it, I woulde fometimes as lief have them quiete. The *Sheepscote* Sundays suited me better. The Sabbath Exercife of the Boys is to read a Chapter in the *Greek* Testament, heare my Husband expounde the fame; and write out a System of Divinitie as he dictates to them, walking to and fro. In liftening thereto, I find my Pleafure and Profit.

I have alfoe my owne little Catechifing, after a humbler Sorte, in the Kitchen, and fome poore Folk to relieve and confole, with my Husband's

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band's Concurrence and Encouragement. Thus, the Sabbath is devoutlie and happilie passed.

My Husband alsoe takes, once in a Fortnighte or soe, what he blythelie calls "a gaudy Day," equallie to his owne Content, the Boys', and mine. On these Occasions, it is my Province to provide colde Fowls or Pigeon Pie, which *Hubert* carries, with what else we neede, to the Spot selected for our Camp Dinner. Sometimes we take Boat to *Richmond* or *Greenwich*. Two young Gallants, Mr. *Alphrey* and Mr. *Miller*, love to joyn our Partie, and toil at the Oar, or scramble up the Hills, as merrilie as the Boys. I must say they deal savagelie with the Pigeon Pie afterwards. They have as wild Spiritts as our *Dick* and *Harry*, but withal a most wonderfull Reverence for my Husband,

Husband, whom they courte to read and recite, and provoke to pleasant Argument, never prolonged to Wearinesse, and seasoned with frolic Jest and Witt. Olde Mr. *Milton* joyns not these Parties. I leave him alwaies to *Dolly's* Care, firste providing for him a Sweetbread or some smalle Relish, such as he loves. He is in Bed ere we Return, which is oft by Moonlighte.

How soone must Smiles give Way to Tears! Here is a Letter from deare *Mother*, taking noe Note of what I write to her, and for good Reason, she is soe distraught at her owne and deare *Father's* ill Condition. The Rebels (I must call them such,) have soe stript and opprest them, they cannot make their House tenantable; nor have Aught to feede on, had they e'en a whole Roof over their Heads. The  
Neighbour-

1646.

Neighbourhoode is too hot to holde them; olde Friends cowardlie and fuspicious, olde and new Foes in League together. Leave *Oxon* they must; but where to goe? *Father*, despite his broken Health and Hatred of the Foreigner, must needes depart beyond Seas; at leaste within the six Months; but how, with an emptie Purse, make his Way in a strange Land, with a Wife and seven Children at his Heels? Soe ends *Mother* with a “*Lord* have Mercy “upon us!” as though her House were as surelie doomed to Destruction as if it helde the Plague.

Mine Eyes were yet swollen with Tears, when my Husband stept in. He askt, “What ails you, precious “Wife?” I coulde but sigh, and give him the Letter. Having read the Same, he says, “But what, my “dearest? Have we not ample  
Room

“ Room here for them alle? I speak  
“ as to Generalls, you must care for  
“ Particulars, and stow them as you  
“ will. There are plenty of small  
“ Rooms for the Boys; but, if your  
“ Father, being infirm, needes a  
“ Ground-floor Chamber, you and  
“ I will mount aloft.”

I coulde but look my Thankfulle-  
ness and kifs his Hand. “ Nay,”  
he added, with increasing Gentle-  
ness, “ think not I have seene your  
“ Cares for my owne Father without  
“ loving and blessing you. Let Mr.  
“ *Powell* come and see us happie;  
“ it may tend to make him foe.  
“ Let him and his abide with us,  
“ at the leaste, till the Spring; his  
“ Lads will studdy and play with  
“ mine, your Mother will help you  
“ in your Houfewiferie, the two olde  
“ Men will chrip together beside  
“ the *Christmasse* Hearth; and, if I  
find

1646.

“ find thy Weeklie Bills the heavier  
“ ’twill be but to write another  
“ Book, and make a better Bargain  
“ for it than I did for the last.  
“ We will use Hospitalitie without  
“ grudging; and, as for your owne  
“ Increase of Cares, I suppose ’twill  
“ be but to order two Legs of Mutton  
“ insteade of one!”

And soe, with a Laugh, left me,  
most joyfulle, happy Wife! to draw  
Sweete out of Sowre, Delighte out  
of Sorrowe; and to summon mine  
owne Kindred aboute me, and wipe  
away their Tears, bid them eat,  
drink, and be merry, and shew  
myselfe to them, how proud, how  
cherished a Wife!

Surelie my Mother will learne to  
love *John Milton* at last! If she  
doth not, this will be my secret  
Crosse, for ’tis hard to love dearlie  
two Persons who esteeme not one  
another.

another. But she will, she must, not onlie respect him for his Uprightnesse and Magnanimitie, coupled with what himselfe calls “an honest Haughtinesse and Self-esteeme,” but *like* him for his kind and equall Temper, (*not* “harsh and crabbed,” as I have heard her call it,) his easie Flow of Mirthe, his Manners, unaffectedlie cheerfull; his Voice, musically; his Person, beautifull; his Habitt, gracefull; his Hospitalitie, naturall to him; his Purse, Countenance, Time, Trouble, at his Friend’s Service; his Devotion, humble; his Forgivenessse, heavenlie! May it please *God* that my Mother shall like *John Milton!* . . . .

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